

BT 77
M2
opy 1

BT 77

.M2

Copy 1



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

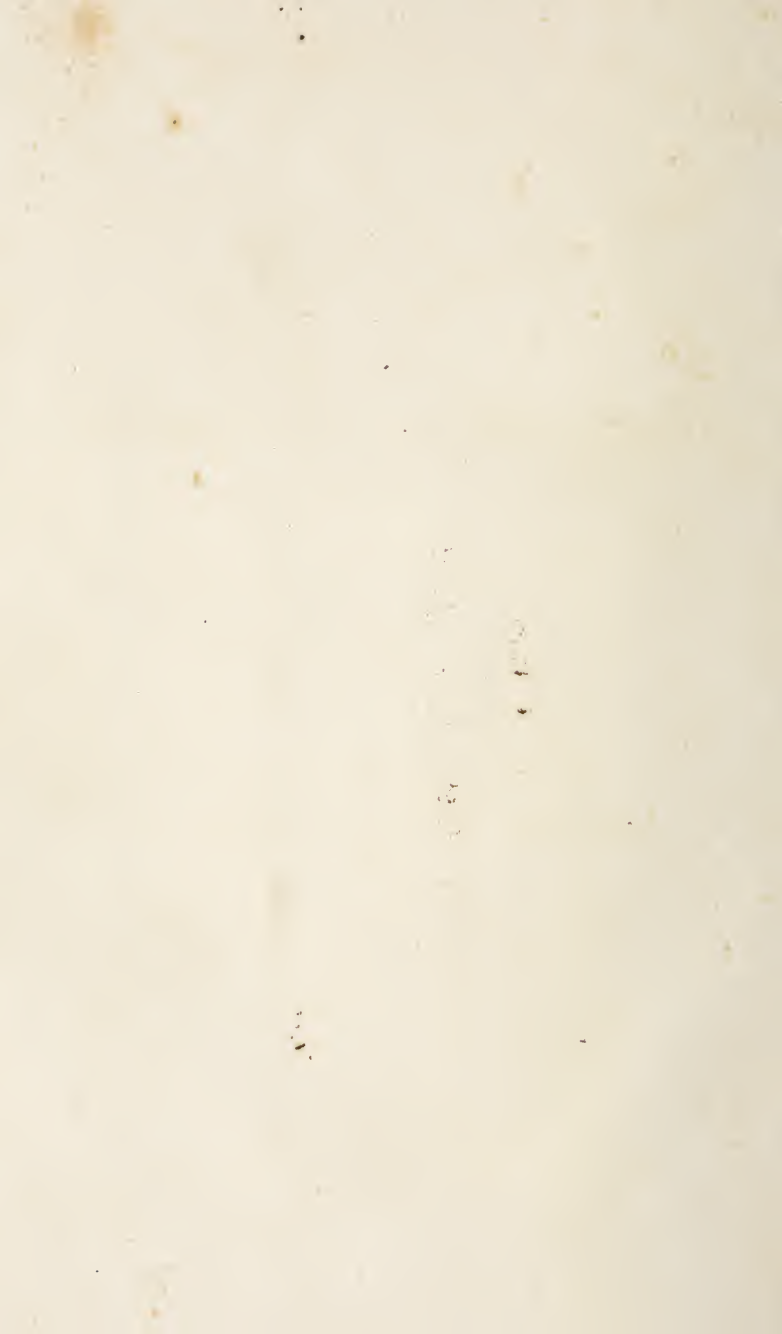
Chap. BT 77

Shelf M 2

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







DISCOURSES

ON

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

BY

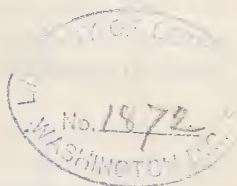
ELDER JAMES MAPLE,

Pastor of the Christian Church at Franklin, Ohio.

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO:

PUBLISHED AT THE GOSPEL HERALD OFFICE.

1851.

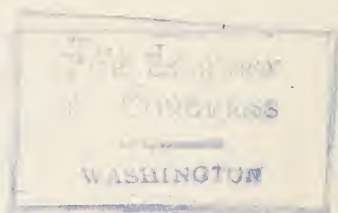


8888-107810

BT77

Me

WASHINGTON 2/17/1910



RECEIVED

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

RECEIVED

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

1910

WEH 29 114 39

PREFACE.

THESE Discourses were originally prepared for the pulpit, and are now given to the public with the hope that they may be instrumental, under the blessing of Heaven, of doing good. My object is to awaken thought—to arouse men to reflection, and lead them to God—to instruct the mind, improve the heart, and make man better.

In some of the discourses I had occasion to investigate the views of others ; but I have endeavored to do it impartially, and in a Christian spirit. I have labored to “speak the truth in love.”

The character of Christ, and the great work which he came to accomplish, has long been a subject of study with me, and I now give to the public the result of my labors. I do not claim perfection. I have only presented in these discourses what I believe to be nearer the truth than any thing I have ever seen. I am only a learner in the school of Christ. I do not wish to speak dogmatically, where the greatest and best minds that ever adorned the Church have differed. I only desire to lead men to the investigation of divine truth, and to the reception of the Spirit of Christ.

What has lead to the publishing of this work, at this time, is the failure of my health. Disease has compelled me to leave the walls of Zion ; but I have not lost my interest in, and love for the cause of my beloved Savior. I still desire to be useful to my fellow-men, and I have concluded to preach to them

through the press, as this is now the only medium through which I can preach to sinners.

Actuated by the purest motives, I now send forth this little work on its mission of love, with the earnest prayer, that it may be the means of doing good to my fellow men.

JAMES MAPLE.

FRANKLIN, *May*, 1851.

CONTENTS.

DISCOURSE I.

The Divinity of Christ, ...	1
-----------------------------------	---

DISCOURSE II.

A History of the Doctrine of the Atonement, ...	12
---	----

DISCOURSE III.

An Examination of the Popular Doctrines of the Atonement, ...	24
---	----

DISCOURSE IV.

The Incarnation of Christ, ...	34
--------------------------------------	----

DISCOURSE V.

The Atonement, ...	47
--------------------------	----

DISCOURSE VI.

The various Purposes to be Accomplished by the Messiah's Death, ...	63
---	----

DISCOURSE VII.

The Mediation of Christ, ...	77
------------------------------------	----

DISCOURSE VIII.

The Propitiatory and Righteousness of God, ...	96
--	----

DISCOURSE IX.

Forgiveness, ...	106
------------------------	-----

DISCOURSE X.

Regeneration, ...	118
-------------------------	-----

DISCOURSE XI.

The Resurrection of the Dead, ...	134
---	-----

DISCOURSE XII.

The Resurrection of the Dead, ...	146
---	-----

DISCOURSE XIII.

Immortality, ...	158
------------------------	-----

DISCOURSE XIV.

This Life a State of Probation, ...	171
---	-----

DISCOURSE XV.

The Philosophy of Prayer, ...	182
-------------------------------------	-----

DISCOURSE XVI.

The Reasonableness of Christianity, ...	173
---	-----

DISCOURSE XVII.

The Foundation of the Christian's Love, ...	205
---	-----

DISCOURSE I.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

I COR. XV: 47.

The second man is the Lord from heaven.

JESUS CHRIST is the great founder of the Christian religion, the author of our salvation, and our only hope of the redemption of a lost world. He fills the highest offices, and to his hand is intrusted the greatest work ever intrusted to any of the intelligences of the universe, so far as we are acquainted. It is interesting and important, then, that we should have correct Scriptural views of his person and character. Our text points to a great fact in his history. It informs us that this world is not his native home—that he did not take his origin in the days of Augustus Cæsar—but that “he is the Lord from heaven.” Jesus Christ existed with his Father, anterior to his appearance on earth, as a spiritual intelligence distinct from God.

There is some diversity of opinion among the learned upon this subject. Dr. Watts taught, that it was the human soul of Christ that existed with God “before the world was ;” and that it was to this soul that God said, “Let us make man in our image.” According to Watts,

man was made in the image of Christ's human soul. Some deny the pre-existence of Christ ; but it is obvious, to my mind, that Christ had a personal existence "before the foundation of the world." Hence, the language of the text—"The second man *is the Lord from Heaven.*" The argument of the Apostle in this chapter is based on the heavenly origin and superhuman character of Christ ; and if he had no personal existence before he was born of the Virgin Mary, how could it be said, he "is the Lord from heaven ?"

The offices and character of Christ imply that he is of divine origin, and possesses more than human or angelic dignity. He spake and acted as though he was more than a man, and conscious of his superiority to all around him. There is a dignity and grandeur about him that is peculiar to him alone. "Never man spake like this man." There is an authority about him altogether peculiar, that cannot be reconciled with the idea that he is a mere man, and was speaking to his equals.

The spotless purity of Christ creates a broad distinction between him and all human beings. "In him is no sin." "He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." This is something that cannot be accounted for by difference in circumstances or education. To be absolutely free from sin, is to be something more than any human being ever has been since the fall of Adam. The immaculate purity of Christ cannot be reconciled with the idea that he is a being of human origin. This is something that cannot be expected of man in this life.

The offices which Christ sustains as Savior of the world, the one mediator between God and man, the Prince

of life, the Judge of all men, is incompatible with the idea of simple humanity. Do these offices belong to one who needs a Savior and mediator himself—one who has sins to pardon?—for this must have been the case with Christ, if he was simply a man. The offices which he fills, imply that he is more than human.

The mission which Christ filled, as Savior of the world, was the highest that any of the intelligences of the universe ever filled, and the greatest in its results of all the works that God ever intrusted to any of his children. It seems but reasonable and natural to suppose, that for so lofty a function God would select the highest and noblest among the dignitaries of heaven, rather than a mere man.

Some of the titles given to Christ imply that he is more than a man. He is styled the “Son of God.” This title is given to angels and men; but it is applied to Christ in a different sense. He is styled the “*only begotten Son of God.*” This title is never applied to any other intelligence. This fact seems to designate a rank superior to that of any other being in the universe.

It is obvious, from the above considerations, that the Messiah possessed more than human dignity—that he “is the Lord from heaven,” the “first-born of every creature.” But this doctrine has a stronger foundation than mere inferences from the manner of his teaching, his spotless purity, the offices which he fills, the great work that is intrusted to his hands, and the titles that are given him. The Redeemer himself teaches this great truth. In his conversation with Nicodemus he said, “No man hath ascended up to heaven, *but he that came down from heaven.*” This was spoken prior to his ascension to heaven. It follows, then, as a necessary sequence, that he must

have existed with the Father anterior to his birth, in the days of Cæsar, else he could not have said, that he “came down from heaven.” John the Baptist said of Christ, “*He that cometh from heaven, is above all.*” If Christ had not existed in heaven, how could “he have come down from heaven?” He said to his disciples, “What and if ye see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?” He is here speaking of his ascension to heaven, and informs us that this is “*where he was before*” he came into the world. This language is too unequivocal and explicit to be misunderstood. It clearly teaches his pre-existence. In a conversation with the Jews, Christ “said unto them,—If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” Now, if Christ “proceeded forth and came from God,” he must have existed with him. Again, he said to the Jews, “*Before Abraham was, I AM.*” Christ was not born into the world until many centuries after Abraham’s death, yet he asserts that he was “before Abraham”—consequently he must have existed with his Father anterior to his birth in the days of Augustus Cæsar. “I came forth from the Father, and came into the world,” said Christ. Again: “I leave the world, and go to the Father.” This language as clearly proves that he existed with the Father before he came into the world, as it does that he existed in this world before he left it, and went to his Father. In solemn prayer to his Father he said, “O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” How could Christ have a glory with the Father “before the world was,” unless he existed with him before the creation of the world? In the same prayer, he said,

“As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them (the disciples) into the world.” The disciples for whom Christ was praying, existed with him before he sent them into the world to preach the Gospel ; and as he uses the same language in reference to himself, he must also have existed with God before he “sent him into the world.” Again he said, “Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.” If Christ did not exist with God “before the world was,” how could he have loved him “before the foundation of the world ?” It is impossible to love a being that has no existence.”

The Gospel of St. John opens with the following striking language . “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” Here Christ is represented as being “with God in the beginning,” or creation of the world. That John here alludes to the creation of the world, is obvious from the fact, that in the next verse he says, “All things were made by him.” Paul uses the same language to denote the creation of the world. “Thou Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.” It is obvious from the face of this text, that Paul is speaking of the creation of the world. Now, if Christ was with God in the creation of the world, he must have had a personal existence anterior to his birth into the world.

To his Corinthian brethren Paul said, “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” The Apostle here affirms that Christ was rich. The question then arises, where and when ? Was it in this world ? Nay. He was born of

poor parents, and never acquired any riches. If he was rich, it must have been anterior to his advent into the world. The obvious sense of the Apostle's language is, that to accomplish man's salvation, Christ passed from a richer to a poorer, from a higher to an humbler state; from heaven to earth, from the society of angels to the society of sinful man. Hence, said Paul, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." From this important passage, we learn: 1st. That Christ was "in the form of God." 2d. That he "took on him the form of a servant." 3d. That he was "in the form of God" before he "took on himself the form of a servant." When did Christ take the form of a servant? Paul answers, when he "was made in the likeness of men." It follows, then, that he was "in the form of God" anterior to his coming into the world.

I will quote another striking affirmation from the writings of Paul: *He (Christ) is before all things.*" In this connection Paul is speaking of "all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth," and then asserts that Christ is "before all things" that are "in heaven and in earth." This proves, to a demonstration, the pre-existence of Christ.

John says, "The word was made flesh." This implies that Christ existed before he was made flesh. For instance: Louis Phillippe was made king of France. This implies that he had a distinct personal existence before he was made king. The above language as strongly implies that the Word had a personal existence before he "was made flesh."

In his pre-existent state, Christ possessed a nature superior to the holy angels: "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." This implies that he possessed a dignity superior to the angels of Heaven: "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." Next to the infinite JEHOVAH, he is the highest intelligence in the universe, and possesses a nature far superior to that of the tallest angel that burns in the presence of the eternal throne—he is the brightest jewel in heaven.

It was by Christ that God created the worlds, and, through his agency, called into existence the material universe. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. God created all things by Christ; by him also he made the worlds." But the Scriptures ascribe to our Savior a loftier function than the creation of a perishing universe. This is not his highest and noblest work. The thrones, principalities, and powers; the ranks and distinctions in the spiritual universe, whether seen or unseen, whether apostles, pastors, and teachers among men; or those angelic beings who occupy the highest places nearest the throne—first in song and dignity among the hosts of Heaven. Their dignities, their thrones, their powers, their honors, and their glories are his creation. He ordains shepherds after his own heart on earth; calls and commissions his own ministers; and he assigns to each his place, his sphere in heaven. He governs all, and, through him, the great family of God in heaven, and earth, are bound together as one: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,

whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him, and for him ; he is before all things, and by him all things consist ; and he is the head of the body—the Church ; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead ; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.” This place, as Prince and head of God’s spiritual kingdom, the Scriptures with one voice accord to Christ ; and we gratefully re-echo the ecstatic ascription of those in heaven, who sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”

“Worthy is the Lamb that died,” the angels cry,

“To be exalted thus ;”

“Worthy the Lamb,” our lips reply,

“For he was slain for us.”

Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature. He sustained the relation of a son to his Father in his pre-existent state. “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.” This implies that he was the Son of God before he came into the world, and did not become such by coming into the world. “When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.” Who was it that “God sent forth ?” “His son.” He must, then, have been His son before he was sent. The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.” This implies that he was the Son of God prior to his manifestation in the flesh. We have seen that God created the world by his Son ; he must, then, have been the Son of God anterior to the creation of the world.

Christ is the perfect image of God—“The brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” He

“is the image of the invisible God.” He bore the express image of the physical and moral attributes of God. He spake the words and wrought the works of God. He revealed the things of God to man. His works manifest supernatural power in every department of nature. The stormy sea obeyed his commands, and the winds hushed into stillness at the sound of his voice; the bread in the desert grew beneath his touch, and the water blushed to wine at his command; he opened the eyes of the blind, loosed the tongue of the dumb, unstopped the ears of the deaf, poured the tide of health through the palsied limbs, caused the lame to leap with gladness, restored health to the dying, broke the slumbers of the tomb, and called the dead forth to life. By his mighty works he laid bare the arm of Omnipotence, revealed the hidings of divine power, and wrought, without any intermediate agency, the most stupendous works. By these miracles he represents to our faith, and brings home to our hearts, the divine Omnipotence. The works of Christ enable us to repose on the arm of JEHOVAH. When we contemplate his mighty works, we feel that the vast universe is not under its own control; that its giant forces are governed and controlled by Him who takes cognizance of the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our head. The mighty works of our Savior rebuke our dependency, and enable us to calmly repose our trust in that Providence that orders all things well and good for the intelligent universe.

Christ is revealed as the image of the divine Omnipotence. He brings to us from the infinite treasure of wisdom and knowledge, all that we need to know to secure our salvation. He speaks with authority—declares the

things that he has seen with God—brings revelations from heaven, and reveals the mind of JEHOVAH. His teachings are not inferences and deductions from a previous course of argument; but they are declarations of eternal truth—transcripts of the infinite mind. “In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

Christ is the image of the moral character of God. He is a transcript of the divine character. In him we behold the goodness, mercy, love, benevolence, forgiveness, and justice of God. He is perfect. When we read the history of Christ we are conscious that we are communing with spotless purity, with absolute perfection. He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” In him centered all those virtues that can adorn human nature and embellish the human heart. Man has never been able to think of anything that would add to his character.

“No mortal can with him compare,
Among the sons of men;
Fairer is he than all the fair,
That fill the heavenly train.”

Christ left the bosom of his father, the society of the immortal spirits around the eternal throne, turned his back upon the honors and dignities of heaven, “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” This was all done for the salvation of man. “He hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

“With pitying eyes the Prince of Grace
Beheld our helpless grief;
He saw, and (O, amazing love!)
He flew to our relief.

“Down from the shining seats above,
With joyful haste he fled;
Enter’d the grave, in mortal flesh,
And dwelt among the dead.”

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For, scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Here is the greatest exhibition of love that was ever made to the world. It has no parallel in the history of the universe. The angels, archangels, the cherubim and seraphim of heaven contemplate this glorious exhibition of infinite love with wonder and amazement. “And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels around about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessings.”

“His love, what mortal thought can reach!
What mortal tongue display!
Imagination’s utmost stretch,
In wonder dies away.”

Now, “unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Even so — Amen.”

DISCOURSE II.

A HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

PSALMS XXV: 5.

Lead me into thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation: on thee I wait all the day.

IN the teachings of Christ and the apostles, we have a beautiful and sublime system of religion, embracing theory and example—precept and practice—doctrine and worship. Here we find Christianity in its original purity, unadulterated by the dreams, notions and superstition of man. Here she rises up before the mind of the Bible student, adorned in all her native charms, as a grand, sublime, and perfect system of divine truth, having God for its author, Christ for its exemplifier, and the salvation and ultimate happiness of man for its object. Here the stream flows in all its native purity; but as we follow it down from the days of Christ and the apostles, we find its pure and placid waters soon disturbed by the productions of man. As we advance along down the stream, we find turbid little rivulets, the productions of heathen philosophy, flowing into it; and, the further we advance, the larger and more numerous they are. They increase in number, depth and murkiness, until the whole stream of truth

is polluted. It is painful to the lover of the Bible to contemplate the awful corruptions that were introduced into the church. Early in the Christian era a dark cloud began to arise and spread over the mental, spiritual, and theological horizon of the world. At first, it was only in appearance like a man's hand; but it soon grew in breadth and thickness. It rolled up its dark folds until the moral and intellectual heavens were shrouded in midnight darkness and gloom. It was only here and there that the heavenly rays of the sun of righteousness rendered more brilliant by the surrounding gloom, penetrated the dark cloud. From the fall of the western empire to the days of Luther, Zwingli and Malancthon, the empire of mind was shrouded in Tartarian darkness.

Catholicism, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, stretched forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.

"Darkness covered the earth" and gross darkness the minds of the people. Legendary stories, metaphysical speculations, on trifling and unprofitable subjects, foolish and unmeaning ceremonies, borrowed from Pagan mythology, pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, the worshipping of images, pictures, saints and angels had taken the place of the pure doctrine of Christ, the spiritual and elevating worship of Christianity.

The Oracles Divine,
By superstition veil'd, refus'd to shine,
Philosophers turn'd priests, baptiz'd their love,
And Christian call'd what Pagan was before :
Took some from Gentile books, and some from Jew,
Compounded, mix'd, identified the two;
Took some from Christ to sanctify their shame,
Then call'd the monster by the Christian name!

Then roll'd the ling'ring ages dark and drear,
There revel'd vice, reign'd superstition here :
Fictions and fables, daily multiplied,
Upheav'd corruptions, ever-heaving tide;
Still more it swell'd as grew the love of gold,
And onward whirl'd, the ghostly torrent roll'd.
Rolling it swell'd, and ran as deep as wide,
As high as deep plung'd on the head-long tide;
As vile as wide it grew, as foul as deep,
As dark as high, convolving up the steep;
Till gath'ring to a mass imperial grown,
It rul'd the subject world from Cæsar's throne !

The corruptions of Christianity, both of doctrine and practice, were insidiously introduced into the church. They were brought in by degrees, and are the growth of ages. The first step was but a slight advancement; but this laid the foundation for the second which was a still greater advancement; and the second prepared the way for the third; thus the work progressed, until ignorance and superstition reigned triumphantly. It was in this manner that praying for the dead, worshipping the saints, adoring pictures and images, were introduced into the church. It was the doctrine of heathen philosophy that the souls of the dead hovered about the graves of their dead bodies, and were sensible of any attention paid to them. Receiving this opinion from the disciples of the porch and academy, the primitive christians soon advanced one step farther, and began to consider them, not only as present with them and sensible of any attention paid to them, but also as still members of their society and objects of their prayer, as they had been when alive. It was also a custom among the early Christians to meet together at the graves of their departed friends, not to

worship them, but because they supposed that their devotional feelings were sensibly excited by the place. From the principle of association, they were naturally led to reflect much upon the departed saints, and believing them to be sensible of all attention paid to them, they were naturally led to consider them as objects of their prayers. Here originated the practice of praying for the dead.

It was also an early custom among the primitive Christians to meet annually at the graves of the martyrs, to make offerings in the name of the deceased, as an acknowledgment that they still considered them as members of their respective churches, and we find that they had a method of excommunicating them even after death. From the respect paid to martyrs, they soon came to consider them as being brought so near to God as to have no need of their prayers; but as having nearer access to God than the living. From this they soon passed from praying for them to praying to them. As the Christians were wont to meet at the tombs of the saints to worship, it naturally led them when the empire became Christian, to erect temples at the graves of the saints. This naturally suggested the necessity of having the pictures of the saints in the churches, to whose honor they were erected; and also pictures to represent the principal acts of their lives. This paved the way for the introduction of the pictures and images of Christ, and led the worshippers from the worship of saints to the worship of their images; and from the worship of Christ to the adoration of his picture or image.

I have introduced this subject to show the manner in which the corruptions, both of doctrine and worship, were introduced into the Church of Christ. They are the

growth of ages. The doctrine of vicarious atonement, trinity, and total depravity, were introduced into the church by degrees; and they may all be traced back to the heathen philosophy, introduced into the church by the conversion of some of the disciples of Plato.

It was many ages from the days of Christ and his Apostles before the popular doctrine of vicarious atonement assumed its present form, and was traced to its legitimate results. It is the growth of centuries. In the writings of the Christian fathers immediately following the Apostles, we find no traces of a vicarious atonement. They speak of our Savior's sufferings and death, in the figurative language of the New Testament, but never speak of them as a vicarious atonement. They invariably represent God as freely pardoning the sinner, on the condition of his repentance and reformation. Clemens Romanus says, "Let us search in all ages that have gone before, and let us learn that the Lord has, in every one of them, still given place for repentance to such as would turn to him." He then introduces the preaching of Noah to the old world, and of Jonah to the Ninevites, of whom he says, "Howbeit they, repenting of their sins, appeased God by their prayer, and were saved, though they were strangers to the covenant of God." Again he remarks, "And especially let them learn how great a power humility has with God; how much a pure and holy charity avails with him; how excellent and great his fear is; and how it will save all such as turn to him in holiness, in a pure mind." The writings of all the fathers during the first and second centuries, are consonant with the above language.

In the controversies that sprang up immediately follow-

ing the apostolic age, we find no mention of a vicarious atonement. This is a remarkable fact; for these controversies were of such a nature as to naturally call out this sentiment, if it had been held by the primitive Christians as an essential part of the Christian system. We find not even the slightest traces of it in any of the ancient summaries of the Christian doctrine. Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, and Tertullian, wrote apologies for the Christian religion, and gave an account of the principal doctrines of Christianity; but they make no mention of a vicarious atonement. Lactantius treats professedly of the Christian system, as it was received in his age; but he nowhere mentions this doctrine. In his *divine institutions*, he treats of the nature of sin, the mercy of God, and the efficacy of repentance, as if he had never heard of any such doctrine as vicarious atonement.

About the close of the second century we find that the Christian fathers began to understand the figurative language of the New Testament, in reference to the death of Christ and the salvation of man, in a more literal sense. They began to interpret the passages in which the terms redemption, purchased, and bought occur in a literal manner; but they had no idea that Christ purchased us from the justice of God. The prevalent idea in the time of Origen and Austin was, that Christ purchased us literally; but it was from the devil, and to him the price was paid, and not to God. Origen says: "If ye were bought with a price, as Paul affirms, we must have been bought from some person whose slaves we were, who also demanded what price he pleased, that he might dismiss from his power those which he held. But it was the devil that held us. For to him we had been given

over for our sins. Whereupon, he demanded the blood of Christ as the price of our redemption." Ambrose says: "We were pledged to a bad creditor for sin. Christ came, and offered his blood for us." Austin wrote in defence of the doctrine, and it appears that this was the general opinion down to the age of the schoolmen.

About two hundred and fifty years after the time of Austin, we meet with the writings of Gregory the Great, who was the most distinguished writer of his time. He had no well digested system of atonement, and was far from having any consistent notions of vicarious sacrifice. He contended for the necessity of some expiation, but, at the same time says, that our salvation might have been effected by Christ in some other way than by his death. He says, "The rust of sin could not be purged without the fire of torment; Christ, therefore, came without fault, that he might subject himself to voluntary torment, that he might bear the punishment due to our sins." He remarks further: "Christ might have assisted us without suffering, for that he who made us, could deliver us from suffering without his own death. But he chose this method, because by it he shewed more love to us."

The nearest approach that we find to the doctrine of a vicarious atonement is in the ninth century. It comes nearer the popular doctrine on this subject than anything that we find before this period. Theodorus Abucara, a Greek writer, says: "God, by his judgments, demanded of us all things that are witten in the law, which we could not pay; the Lord paid for us, taking upon himself the curse and condemnation to which we were obnoxious." Again he says, "Christ, the mediator, reconciled us to God."

But even down as late as the eleventh century the doctrine of vicarious atonement was not clearly defined and fixed, if we are to judge from the writings of Anselm, who was the ablest writer of his time. He says, "That of the innumerable other methods, by which God, being omnipotent, might have saved men, he chose the death of Christ, that by it he might, at the same time, manifest his love to men." Again, he asks, "Was the Father so angry with men, that unless the Son had died for us, he would not be appeased? No: For the Father hath loved us even when we were in our sins." In the twelfth century we find nothing more settled than in the age of Anselm. Peter Lombard, the greatest authority in the school of theology, before the appearance of Thomas Aquinas, says, "that in the death of Christ, the love of God towards us is made conspicuous, and by means of it we are moved and excited to love God, who has done so much for us, and thus we become justified—that is, being free from sin, we become righteous. The death of Christ, therefore, justifies, because by means of it love is excited in our hearts." Even the system of atonement taught by Thomas Aquinas, the great oracle and luminary of the Latin church, was a mixed one. He says: "In consequence of sin, man was a debtor to God as a judge, and to the devil as a tormentor. And with respect to God, justice required that man should be redeemed, but not with respect to the devil; so that Christ paid his blood to God, and not to the devil." "It was not naturally impossible for God," he says, "to be reconciled to man without the death of Christ; but this was more convenient, as by this means he obtained more and better gifts than by the mere will of God." Again, he says, "God might

have remitted the sins of men by his mere will, but that it is more convenient to do it by the death of Christ, on account of the various uses which it answered at the same time, especially moral ones; and among others he mentions our being thereby the more excited to love God, and that Christ thereby gave an example of obedience, humility, and fortitude."

When we come down to the age of the reformers we find a more definite and fixed system of atonement than in any of the preceding ages. The first who separated from the Roman Catholic Church were the Waldenses, an ancient and interesting people in the valleys of Piedmont. In their confession of faith, which was presented to the French king in 1544, we find the following language: "The fathers, to whom Christ was promised, notwithstanding their sin and their impotence by the law, desired the coming of Christ to satisfy for their sins, and to fulfil the law by itself." The next reformer, with whom we meet in the history of the church is Wickliff, who was a firm believer in a vicarious atonement.

After the time of Luther, we find the doctrine of vicarious atonement reduced to a regular system, founded upon certain principles, and carried to its proper extent. In the confession of faith presented to the Emperor, Charles V, at Augsburg, in 1530, we find the assertion that "Christ died to reconcile the Father to us, and that he might be a true sacrifice for the guilt not only of original sin, but also for all the actual sins of men." We find the same sentiments embodied in the Helvetic Confession of faith, of the year 1536, and which was approved by all the Protestant churches of Europe. It is also clearly expressed in the Synod of Dort.

One great reason for the reformers catching so eagerly at the doctrine of a vicarious atonement, and ascribing so much to the merits of Christ, was the great abuse that the Catholics made of penance, purgatory, and indulgence, which were founded on the doctrine of merit. It was perfectly natural that in avoiding this extreme, the reformers should lean to the opposite, and disclaim against all good works, and build all hopes of future happiness upon the satisfaction that Christ made to the justice of God for us, and his righteousness imputed to us.

The doctrine of a vicarious atonement, though it was advocated by the reformers, was not generally received. There were some that struck upon a proper medium between the Popish doctrine of penance, indulgences, and purgatory, and the reformers doctrine of a vicarious atonement. A distinguished writer of that period says, "We are saved, however, from the punishment of our sins by Christ, because by his great power in heaven and earth, he brings it about, that no punishment can reach us; and by the same power he will accomplish our entire and perpetual freedom from death, which is the wages of sin, and its principal and peculiar punishment. But this method of rescuing us from the punishment of our sins, is very different from that which implies a satisfaction for them. Nothing can be more repugnant to each other than the freedom of pardon and satisfaction. Indeed, no man of judgment and piety ought to entertain the idea of satisfaction for sin; since it plainly does very much derogate from the power and authority, or the goodness and mercy of God."

It is now generally supposed by the advocates of vicarious atonement, that the scene of Christ's meritorious

sufferings, when he actually bore the sins of men, and suffered the punishment due to the sins of men, was either in the garden, or upon the ignominious cross; but Calvin says, "nothing would have been done by the mere death of Christ, if he had not also afterwards descended into hell, where he sustained that death which is inflicted by an angry God on the wicked."

The doctrine of a vicarious atonement is held by all the orthodox churches of the present day; but there are some who reject the idea of Christ's death being accepted in lieu of all men, who yet think that his death serves to exhibit the divine displeasure at sin in such a manner, as that it would not have been expedient to pardon the sinner without it. There are others who think that the death of Christ was necessary to the forgiveness of sin, and the restoration of man to eternal life; but in what way, is not revealed in the Scriptures. There are still others who think Christ died only as a martyr to the truth, as did Paul and Peter.

The doctrine of a vicarious atonement was ages in growing to its present form. It was insidiously introduced into the church, and it will take time and much labor to eradicate it. It is deeply rooted in the prejudices and affections of Christians; and, like all errors that have been received as true for ages, it will take ages to root it out. This doctrine is gradually losing its hold on the mind of the church, and is slowly receding before the ever-increasing light of the Gospel. Many things that were once held as essential to this doctrine, have been abandoned as gross errors. The field of controversy is gradually narrowing; and, as Christians are led to take a more rational, philosophical, and Scriptural view of Christianity, both in theory and

practice, we may expect them to receive more correct views of Christian doctrine. The dark cloud that for so many ages shrouded the church and the world in Tartarean darkness, is slowly rolling back its dark folds—and the genial rays of the light of divine truth is gradually illuminating the world. A flood of light has already burst in upon the theological world. Ignorance, error, and superstition, are receding before the light of the everlasting Gospel; and I look forward with joyful anticipations to the glorious period, of which the Hebrew poets have sung in the sublimest strains of sacred eloquence—when the world shall be emancipated from the thralldom of ignorance, superstition and sin, and all shall bow in humble adoration at the shrine of truth. “The wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

DISCOURSE III.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE POPULAR DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

I. THESS. v : 21.

Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.

A system that has been received as true for ages, by the general consent of mankind, is apt to be received by the mass of minds as of divine authority, without due investigation. Indeed, we are apt to regard it as sacrilegious even to examine its claims to divinity. Our fathers received it—the great and good men of the earth for centuries have believed it ; it is venerable with age and consecrated by the dust of centuries — therefore it is true. This is the grounds upon which many of the most popular dogmas of the day maintain their hold on the public mind. This is true in politics, philosophy, and religion. This ought not so to be. We should adopt the philosophical motto of Paul : “Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.” We should never receive a doctrine as true, without examining, in the most rigid manner, its claims to divinity. But after a system has been received as true for centuries, if there are any bold enough to investigate its claims, hundreds will immediately arise with the terrible cry, “HERESY !” This is holy ground and

you must keep off your unholy feet. Multitudes of Christians, distinguished for piety and virtue, have been denounced as heretics and enemies to the cross of Christ for denying the absurd and preposterous dogma of transubstantiation. Many of the brightest ornaments of the church have been excommunicated by the popular religion of the day, for conscientiously rejecting error and refusing to bow to the mandates of bigotry and superstition. Every step in the march of mind has been denounced as a dangerous and damning innovation. Every new truth developed has been opposed by the terrible cry, "*heresy! heresy!*" There was a time when it was dangerous to a man's religious character to call into question the popular doctrine of atonement. It endangered his good name and his standing in the church. But this state of feeling has in some degree passed away, and a man may now investigate this great subject with more freedom and less danger to his religious character. This is an age of investigation. The human mind is shaking off the shackles that have so long bound it down to the earth, and begins to assert its rights. Old systems are being sifted, and new ones are rigidly examined. An investigating spirit has invaded the sacred precincts and secluded shades of the old political, philosophical, and theological systems of the day; and what is the result? Political systems are crumbling—thrones and dynasties are falling—old philosophical systems are being exploded—and theological dogmas, venerable with age and consecrated by the dust of centuries, are receding before the light of "the everlasting Gospel." Even the Pope, armed with the thunder of ecclesiastical power, and defended by the superstition of ages, has not

been able to crush this life-giving spirit. The leaven of truth is at work, and must continue to work, until every system is leavened with the truth of heaven. The Almighty fiat has gone forth, and it must be obeyed.

“Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers.”

In the present discourse I design to investigate the popular doctrine of the atonement. Though I differ from many of my religious friends on this great subject, yet I cherish for them the warmest affection and sympathy.

The orthodox view of this subject is, that Christ died as a substitute for the sinner—met and satisfied the claims of justice in the room of the sinner—suffered the penalty of the law—and thus cleared the sinner; and, that God pardons the sinner in view of what Christ has done. From various considerations, this, to my mind, appears to be a wrong view of this momentous subject. With the kindest feelings toward all Christians I will now present the reasons why I view this subject in a different light.

1. It was impossible, in the nature of things, for Christ to have suffered the punishment due the sinner. What is the punishment of sin? It is the forfeiture of the divine favor, and the sympathy and companionship of the good—the sting of an evil conscience, the undying goadings of depraved desire and unholy passion in a state of protracted opposition to the divine government, and disobedience of the divine law. Its a burden which none but the sinner can bear. Does God withdraw his favor from the innocent? Can the innocent suffer the sting of a guilty conscience? Do they suffer the goadings of depraved desire and sinful passion? No! It is impossible, in the

nature of things, for an innocent man, much less for a perfect being like Christ, to suffer the punishment of sin.

2. It would be impossible, in the nature of law, for Christ to suffer the punishment due to sin, and to satisfy the claims of the law. The law says that the sinner shall suffer, and not the innocent. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If Christ were to suffer the punishment due to sin, it would not satisfy the claims of the law; for the law does not say that the innocent shall suffer "in the room and stead" of the transgressor. If Christ were to suffer as much as is due to all the sinners in the world, it would not satisfy the claims of the law. Here is a man that has committed murder: the law says that he shall die; his neighbor steps forward and suffers death at the hands of the sheriff, in the room of the guilty. Does this satisfy the claims of the law on the guilty murderer? By no means.

3. If Christ suffered the penalty due to sin "in the room and stead of the sinner," it is unjust in God to punish him with death, or send him to hell. If Christ suffered all the punishment that is due to sin, paid off the claims of justice—why is man compelled to pay the debt again? Is this justice? To illustrate the idea, suppose that A owes B one thousand dollars, and C is security for the debt; A fails to meet the demand against him, and B compels C to pay the debt. Has B any claim on A? Can he compel him to pay the debt again? Nay! Just so with the case now in hand. If Christ suffered the penalty of sin—met and satisfied the claims of justice—God can have no claim on the sinner, and it is unjust that he should die and suffer all the consequences of sin.

4. It makes God imperfect during some part of his ex-

istence. If God was originally and independently perfect in mercy, love, and a disposition to pardon,—and the death of Christ reconciled and made him more so,—he must now be imperfect ; because addition is as fatal to perfection in Deity as subtraction—that is, if God was right before the death of Christ affected him, he is wrong now. If he is right now, he must have been wrong before. There is no possible way of escaping the conclusion that God is, or was an imperfect being. If the death of Christ reconciles him at all, he was perfect without it, and imperfect with it, or else he was imperfect without, and perfect with it. Either way it makes God wrong and imperfect, during some portion of his existence.

5. It destroys the scriptural doctrine of forgiveness. I do not mean that it destroys all idea of forgiveness in the economy of salvation ; but that it destroys all forgiveness on the part of God. The Bible clearly and emphatically declares, that God forgives the sinner. Now, if Christ suffered and paid the penalty that was due the sinner, and met and satisfied the justice of God, God does not and cannot forgive the sinner, for there is nothing for him to forgive. Christ has paid all claims that he had on man. J owes K one hundred dollars—J's note is endorsed by L ; K, finding that J is unable to pay the hundred dollars, sues L, and compels him to pay off the note. Now, does, or can, K forgive J the debt ? There is no forgiveness in the matter. Just so with the case now in hand. If Christ pays the debt that man owes to justice, God does not forgive the sinner, for the debt is already cancelled.

6. It is unjust to punish the innocent in the room of the guilty. This is contrary to every principle of justice and righteousness. Would it be right to take the innocent child

of a murderer, and hang it "in the room and stead" of the guilty father? All would shudder at the thought. This is what the popular doctrine of the atonement charges upon God. It makes him punish and kill his innocent Son "in the room and stead of the sinner." It charges upon God a course of conduct, which, if introduced into human government, would subvert and destroy society. Is it wise to apply a principle of action to God, which, if introduced into human government, would destroy it? Apply this principle to the government of the family, church, or State, destruction and ruin would be the result.

7. It is contrary to the spirit of the Lord's prayer. Christ taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." What are we to understand by this? Are we to understand by it, that to forgive our debtors is to compel them, or some one else, to pay the last farthing they owe us? Is this Christian forgiveness? All will answer in the negative. Yet this is the necessary construction that the orthodox theory of atonement puts on this passage. If God does not, cannot, and will not forgive the sinner, until the claims of justice are satisfied, and the debt paid by some one suffering "in the room and stead of the sinner," and if we are to forgive our debtors upon the same principle that God forgives us, we must first make them pay us every farthing, and then forgive them. This is contrary to the spirit of the Scriptures.

8. Christ did not die to purchase the love of God for the sinner. Instead of this, it was the love of God that sent Christ into the world to die for the sinner. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

9. It makes God a changeable being. If God was reconciled to man, he must have changed, for reconciliation implies a change. Now, the Scriptures teach us that God is unchangeable, immutable, eternally the same. He is styled “the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” If reconciliation implies a change, and God is unchangeable, it follows, with all the force of demonstration, that he was not reconciled.

The Scriptures speak of reconciling man to God—but never of reconciling God to man. There is not one solitary passage that says, God was reconciled to man. This, to my mind, is a strong objection to the doctrine of a vicarious atonement—for, if Chrst died to reconcile God to man, the inspired writers would not have neglected to make a clear and unequivocal statement of so important a doctrine.

10. The doctrine of a vicarious atonement is not found in the writings of the apostolic fathers. They uniformly speak of man’s being forgiven on the conditions of his repentance and reformation. Clemens Romanus, who was beheaded about the year 258, says of the Ninevites, “Howbeit they, repenting of their sins, appeased God by their prayer, and were saved though they were strangers to the covenant of God.” “Wherefore,” says he, “let us obey his excellent and glorious will, and imploring his mercy and goodness, let us fall down upon our faces before him, and cast ourselves upon his mercy.” Hemas, who is thought to have lived cotemporary with the apostles, and to be mentioned by Paul, Rom. 16 : 14, says,

"Then shall their sins be forgiven, which they have heretofore committed, and the sins of all the saints, who have sinned even unto this day, if they will repent with all their hearts, and remove all doubts out of their heart." Again, he says, "Whoever has suffered for the name of the Lord are esteemed honorable by the Lord, and all their offences are blotted out, because they have suffered death for the name of the Son of God." Cyprian, who wrote early in the third century, says, "What sinners ought to do, the divine precepts inform us, viz: that satisfaction is made to God by good works, and that sins are done away by the merit of compassion." Lactantius, who died about 325, says, "Let no one who has been led into sin by the impulse of passion despair of himself, for he may be restored if he repent of his sins, and by good works make satisfaction to God. For if we think our children to be converted when they repent of their faults, why should we despair of the clemency of God, being pacified by repentance. Whoever, therefore, obeys the divine precepts is a worshipper of the true God, whose sacrifices are gentleness of mind, an innocent and good life." I might multiply quotations from the fathers on this point, but the above is sufficient to settle the fact that they had no knowledge of a vicarious atonement as it is now taught. This fact is admitted and referred to with surprise by authodox commentators on the writings of the apostolic fathers.

I have now presented a few reasons why I think the doctrine of a vicarious atonement to be incorrect, and in the conclusion, invite the reader to test these arguments by the word of God, which is the only infallible standard of theological truth. All should bow to the teachings of

the Bible. In all matters beyond the cognizance of the human mind, we should make an unconditional surrender to the instructions of the Holy Scriptures. We should not mix up our own fancy with their instructions. Our business is not to guess, but to learn. After we have once established the fact that the Bible is an authentic message from God, by evidences over which the human mind has cognizance, we have no right to set in judgment on what it teaches, if the subjects of which it speaks lies beyond our comprehension; but we should set down at the feet of Christ as humble learners. When the Bible brings truth from a quarter which no human eye ever explored—when it unfolds to us the mind of the Deity, and brings before us the counsels of that infinite Being, whose arm is abroad upon all worlds, and whose views reach to eternity, it is beyond the ken of mortal eye, or of telescope, and we must humbly submit to its instruction. We should go to the Bible to learn our theology. This is the only safe and infallible guide to truth. All other guides are imperfect and liable to mistake the way, and lead the earnest inquirer after truth astray. They are almost sure to lead the student into the darkness and gloom of human speculation; but the Bible is a sure guide to the truth as it is revealed in Christ. It takes the humble, earnest and honest inquirer by the hand, and gently leads him along through the bewildering maze of human philosophy and speculation, into the broad dominion of truth. It is a burning lamp to the feet and a brilliant light to the path of the Christian. It sheds around him its celestial light, inspires his soul with the spirit of heaven, and leads him on to his eternal home in the pure and holy realms above.

“It shines on error’s gloomy night,
Removes the mists away,
And sheds the beams of heavenly light,
Creates the rising day.”

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness—that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” Revelation was given to unfold the true character of God, reveal the plan of salvation, point out the immortal destiny of man, impart motives, give influences, elevate the thoughts, purify the affections, cultivate the heart, bring man to God, and direct him in the road that leads to happiness and heaven ; and all should receive its instruction, bow to its authority, practice its precepts, and obey all its commands. When this is done, all Christians will be one.

DISCOURSE IV.

THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST.

HEB. II: 17, 18.

Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted:

ALL heaven is interested in the salvation of man. God was moved with love for a perishing world. His love was so deep and strong, that he spared not his own Son—the Son of his love—“but delivered him up for us all.” Christ entered fully into the feelings and benevolent designs of his Father; and, animated by a strong and undying love for fallen man, he left the bosom of his Father, the society of the holy angels, the unfading glories of heaven, and came into the world to redeem man from the thralldom of sin, and prepare him for the enjoyment of the society and blessings of heaven.

1st. Jesus Christ took upon himself a body like man's, and appeared in the “likeness of sinful flesh.” “The word was made flesh.” There are different views upon this subject. The popular idea is, that the second person in the Trinity was mysteriously united to “a true body

and reasonable soul," and thus became the Son of man. My view of this important subject is, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who existed with the Father "before the world was," became the soul of a human body—that this body was only the medium through which he communicated with the world, in which he lived, acted, suffered, and died. The Son of God sustained the same relation to this body that the soul of man does to his body. This is the sentiment of the Bible: "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The original word rendered dwelt, signifies to pitch a tent, booth, or temporary hut, for present shelter. It does not properly signify a lasting habitation, or permanent dwelling place. The body of Christ, then, was only a temporary dwelling, in which he resided during his stay on earth. As the body of man is the house in which the soul resides, so the body of Christ was only the temple in which he resided. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we have the following inspired comment on this subject: "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." How are "the children" made "partakers of flesh and blood?" By receiving a body composed of flesh and blood, which is the tabernacle of the soul. From this we would infer, that Christ was made a partaker of flesh and blood, by receiving a human body. "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Here we learn, that God prepared "a body" for Christ; but no where, in the Scripture, is it said, that he prepared "a true body and reasonable soul" for him. The above sentiment is beautifully expressed in the following striking language: "Let this mind be in you,

which was also in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man."

2d. Why was it necessary for Christ to take upon himself "the likeness of sinful flesh," and visit our earth "in the form of a servant?" Why could he not have left the bosom of his Father, visited our earth, instructed man in the way of salvation, and reascended to heaven, without taking upon himself "the seed of Abraham," and enduring the awful sufferings that he did? This was impossible in the nature of things. The nature of man, and his fallen condition, rendered it necessary for Christ to visit our earth just as he did. This is obvious from the following considerations :

First—Man is so constituted, that his senses are adapted to the external world, and his intellect to communication with his fellow man. The delicate bony structure of the ear, which conveys sounds from the tympanum to the sensorium, is nicely adjusted by our Maker to appreciate and convey the tones and modulations of the human voice. Human gesture, likewise, and the expressions of the countenance and the eye, are auxiliary to human language, in conveying instruction. "Man is constituted, both physically and mentally, to receive instruction from one of his own species—and, according to the nature of things, if God would communicate with man, he must do it through the medium of communication that he has given to him. Suppose that God should send an angel from heaven to communicate with and instruct man,—what would be necessary to the successful consummation of his

mission? One of two things must be done. Man's nature must be elevated and adapted to intercourse with angels, or the nature of angels must be let down to the capacity of man, and adapted to intercourse with human nature. And it would be essential to accomplish the greatest amount of good, and to instruct the common mind, that he should not assume the most elevated condition of human nature; and, in his intercourse, use the most cultivated and classical language. He must use common language and familiar illustrations. Here arises the necessity for Christ coming into the world "in the likeness of sinful flesh," and the "fashion of a man." It was necessary that man should be elevated and adapted to communicate with him, or that he should let down his nature, and assume a state adapted to communicate with and instruct man. It appears that the latter was chosen, and he assumed a condition adapted to man's nature and wants. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

2d. It was necessary that Christ should be "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," that he might set man a perfect example. Man is so constituted that he learns better by example than precept. Theory without example, or precept without practice, does not constitute a perfect system of instruction. The theory of surgery, however perfectly it may be taught in our medical schools, without example, would never make a perfect surgeon. A man may teach a perfect system of surveying; but if he would make his students good practical surveyors, he must take his instruments and show them how it is done. He must practically exemplify his theo-

ry. The nature of man is such, that a perfect system of instruction, adapted to his capacity, must embrace both precept and example, theory and practice. It is not only necessary that God should give us a perfect theory and pure precepts ; but this theory must be illustrated by example, and the precepts by practice. The nature and situation of man not only require a perfect example, but this example must be set by one clothed in his own nature. Man must see his duties as a man, exemplified in his own nature. The example of an angel from heaven would not do, for man would exclaim at once, "O ! an angel can do these things, but a man cannot." From this we see the necessity for the introduction of a model character into the world, and this model character must be a perfect human nature. Here we see another great reason why Christ should be "made in the likeness of men." It was necessary to give us a perfect system of instruction suited to our nature and situation in the world. Justin Martyr, in speaking upon this point, says: "Example was necessary to be exhibited to men as well as precepts ; and, therefore, it was necessary that God should be clothed with a mortal body ; be tempted, suffer, and die."

Again : "Christ was made flesh, because he was not only to *teach*, but also to *do*—and to be an example, that none might allege in their excuse the weakness of the flesh." Speaking of the incarnation in general, he says, "Christ assumed a human body, and lived among men, that he might set us an example of living, and dying, and rising again."

3d. It was necessary that Christ should visit our world "in the likeness of sinful flesh," and suffer as he did, in order that he might be fully qualified to sympathize with

man. In his pre-existent state he was not as fully qualified to sympathize with man as he now is. The angels of heaven, though they deeply sympathize with man, yet they cannot as fully enter into his feelings and sympathies as they could if they had the same experience. No man who is not a parent, can enter into the sympathies and feelings of a parent. To do this, he must have a parent's experience. Look yonder at that weeping mother! A lovely and only child has been torn from her fond embrace by the relentless hand of death. The deep fountain of her soul is moved, and the bitter sorrow of her heart finds utterance in burning tears. No one, not even a mother, can enter into the feelings of that mother's heart, and fully sympathize with her, unless she has experienced the same. In order to be fully qualified to sympathize with man, and to enter into all his feelings, Christ "was made flesh," and mingled with human society in all its grades. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Christ having taken upon himself "the seed of Abraham," and lived a life of suffering, sorrow, pain, and want, is fully qualified to sympathize with, and succor the tempted child of God. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." By his incarnation and sufferings, he was made a perfect Savior, suited to our wants. Hence, Paul said, "He was made perfect through suffering."

4th. It was necessary that Christ should visit our earth "in the form of a servant," that by his death and resurrection, he might clearly exemplify and confirm the doctrine of the resurrection, and immortality beyond the grave. Man is more influenced by facts than abstract reasoning. The statement of one simple fact has more influence on the mass of minds, than the most powerful abstract reasoning. The fact that Christ died, and rose again from the dead, has done more to scatter the darkness and gloom that hung around the grave, than all the powers of reasoning. It meets and satisfies the wants of the human mind on this momentous and thrilling subject. It aids and strengthens our faith in the resurrection and future life. Our greatest difficulties on the sublime subject of a resurrection and future life, arise more from the senses and imagination than reason. We look upon the cold and lifeless bodies, the wan features, the palsied limbs of our friends, and in imagination follow them to the silent tomb, picture to ourselves the change of decomposition and decay; and when reason and revelation speak of a resurrection and higher life, the senses and imagination, pointing to the mouldering body, conjure up gloomy doubts, and obscure the light which reason and revelation strive to kindle in the soul. The resurrection of Christ scatters those gloomy doubts that arise like fearful spectres from the tomb, and satisfies the senses and imagination. It presents to us a human body upon which death had done its work, consigned in hopelessness to the tomb, rising again from the gloomy grave, not to return again to the dark charnel-house of death; but, after a short stay on earth, to ascend to a purer and higher state above. These thrilling and soul-stirring facts, submitted to the senses

and imagination, are wisely adapted to remove our chief doubts upon the great subject of the resurrection and future life, and meet the wants of the human mind. Paul teaches the same sentiment: "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage.—1 Cor. xv: 12, 21—Rom. v: 10.

5th. It was necessary that "the Word" should be "made flesh," and suffer as he did, to reconcile man to God. It is only by love that man, when alienated from God, is softened, humbled, and made penitent. He could resist threats, steel his heart against the awful denunciations of destruction and vengeance, disregard the claims of justice, trample the authority of heaven under his feet, and, in the fearful might of a rebellious spirit, he could dare the vengeance of heaven, and disregard a vindictive Deity. But love has a voice to which none can listen unmoved, especially when it speaks from the midst of awful suffering and torture, endured for those with whom it pleads. The hardest heart will relent at the melting calls of love and mercy, that comes bathed in tears and immersed in suffering. Look yonder at that stubborn, hard-hearted, self-willed Son! He disregards the authority of his father, and dares the punishment of the rod. That son has a kind, affectionate, devoted, sympathizing parent, whose heart is animated by the warm feelings and sympathies of a parent. He is deeply interested in the welfare of his son, and tries the influence of his authority and of punishment, to reclaim him—but in vain. He

steels his heart against them. The tender-hearted father is deeply afflicted. The warm feelings and affections of his soul are moved ; and in tears, with a bleeding heart, he goes to a throne of grace in prayer. The son beholds the deep emotion and suffering of his parent, and his heart is melted to contrition. He could resist his authority, but he cannot steel his heart against his tears and suffering. When authority, punishment, and vengeance failed, love and mercy triumphed. The voice of love, speaking to him from the midst of tears and sorrow, moved the hard heart and melted his soul to penitence. It is on the same principle that God subdues the hard heart of the sinner, and melts his soul to contrition. The mission, suffering, and death of Christ, are the greatest exhibition of love ever made to the world. Nothing is so well calculated to move the hard heart, bend the stubborn will, and quicken into life and action the affections and sympathies of the soul, as the incarnation and suffering of Christ. O ! how does the thought that the blessed Christ suffered and bled for all men, awaken the last lingering spark of love, sympathy, and virtuous feeling, and generously fan them into a flame ! O ! how does it melt the hard heart, bring nigh those that were afar off, make them ashamed of their sins, and excite in them the most earnest longing that this love for them should not be in vain. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Christ might have dwelt on the earth in splendor, and ascended to heaven without suffering, and his love for man have been just as strong—but man would not have discovered its depth and power, nor felt the power of his love, if he had not gone as a lamb to the slaughter.

But it is not his own love only that Christ exhibits to the world. His mission is the fruit of his Father's love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." In Christ was manifested the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In him was manifested the intensity of the depth of God's love and pity for man. He exhibited his Father's image, ever ready to forgive the humble penitent. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" In Christ God goes forth as a loving parent to meet his wandering children. In him he reveals the depth and fullness of his paternal love. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Here is laid a broad and firm foundation for faith, confidence, and hope, without which man could never have faith and strength to return from his wanderings, and enter the path of obedience to God.

6th. It was necessary that Christ should be "made flesh," and appear in the character that he did, that he might destroy the pride and selfishness of the human heart. The character of man must, in the nature of things, be the character and condition of the Messiah. He was to be the great model character, and his influence must necessarily be felt through all coming time. His condition in life, then, must necessarily have a tendency to destroy the pride and selfishness of the human heart,

to ameliorate the condition of man, or to foster the ambitious and wicked passions of man's heart. There are two great favorite characters firmly established in the love and affection of the human family—the conquering hero and the philosopher. At the shrine of the first, the Jews and the Romans bowed with all the fervor of Eastern devotion, and to the altar of the second, the Greek brought his oblation. Had Christ appeared in the character that the Romans loved and the Jews ardently expected, of a great temporal Prince, surrounded by the pride, pomp, and splendor of an earthly court,—ambitious to defend and restore the dynasty of David and Solomon, it would have had a direct tendency to foster the pride, selfishness and ambition of the human heart. All would have aspired to equal pride, power, and ambition. It would have kindled and blown into an eternal flame the fire of ambition, selfishness, and war. Its tendency would have been to produce pride and haughtiness in the rich, ambition and selfishness in the middle class, and restlessness and hopeless dejection in the poor.

Had he appeared in the character of a great philosopher, which the Greeks loved, and taken his seat in the halls of learning, and startled the learned world by the development of new and sublime truths, and by the power of a far-reaching intellect, and solved all the abstruse questions that interested the disciples of the porch and academy, his teaching would have interested a few gifted minds, but they would not have been suited to benefit the mass of minds, nor the hearts of a majority of mankind. Proud of his wisdom already, the character of the Messiah would have kindled the flame of pride in the philosopher's heart ; and, instead of blessing him by humbling

his pride, and kindling within him a spirit of sympathy and love for his fellow men, it would have led him and his admirers to look upon the mass of men as an inferior class of beings. Had the Messiah appeared in either of the above characters, instead of being a spiritual blessing to the human family, he would have been a curse; for, instead of destroying the pride and selfishness of the human heart, and inspiring man with a spirit of sympathy and love for his fellows, he would have fostered these base passions of the human heart, and destroyed all sympathy. From this we see, the necessity for Christ assuming the humble form of a servant, and teaching the self-denying doctrine of the cross. Paul well understood the necessity and philosophy of this. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." The humble and self-denying life of Christ was necessary, because it would have a sanctifying influence upon human nature, by counteracting the evil passions of the human heart. It was necessary for him to be "made flesh," and thus become the brother of man, and to assume the character that he did, that man by becoming one with him, might be made happy and useful.

I have now presented a few reasons why it was necessary for Christ to appear "in the likeness of sinful flesh"—and, in the conclusion, earnestly invite your attention to this great and thrilling subject. It should interest all minds. Even the pure and lofty intelligences that encircle the Eternal Throne in Heaven, are deeply interested

in this sublime subject. When the universe was moulded from its chaotic state into its present order, beauty, harmony, and splendor, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy"—but O! with what ecstatic joy and heavenly rapture they celebrated the birth of Christ. O! my dying friends, can you remain uninterested and unmoved by this stupendous exhibition of a Savior's love? Can you turn away, with a thoughtless mind, and a hard heart, from the contemplation of this soul-stirring subject, that interested and moved all heaven? Here we behold the depth and strength of a Savior's love. He left the bosom of his Father, the pure and holy society of the angels, the glories of heaven, the undying splendors of immortality, and "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death—even the death of the cross."

"With pitying eyes the Prince of Grace,
Beheld our helpless grief,
He saw, and O, amazing love!
He flew to our relief.

Down from the shining seats above,
With joyful haste he fled,
Enter'd the grave, in mortal flesh,
And dwelt among the dead.

"O for this love, let rocks and mountains,
Purling streams and crystal fountains,
Roaring thunders, lightning's blazes,
Shout the great Messiah's praises."

Angels assist our mighty joys,
Strike all your harps of gold;
But when you raise your highest notes,
His love can ne'er be told."

DISCOURSE V.

THE ATONEMENT.

HEBREW II: 17, 18.

Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

THE subject of the atonement is one in which the inhabitants of both heaven and earth are deeply interested. It has been made a subject of long, deep and earnest thought by the spiritual and lofty intelligences of heaven. The angels "desire to look into" its sublime mysteries; for in it they behold a glorious exhibition of the infinite wisdom and exuberant goodness of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work." The calling into existence the vast universe of worlds—their arrangement in the beautiful order which they now exhibit—the peopling of those worlds with myriads of inhabitants, and the wise provisions made to meet their wants—are a sublime and glorious development of the infinite wisdom and disinterested benevolence of God; but the incarnation of Christ, and its sublime results, are greater exhibitions of the omniscience

and unbounded goodness of Jehovah. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

The greatest and best minds that ever adorned the earth have made the atonement a subject of long, deep, and earnest meditation.

"Around it lies the wreck of many a sage."

But, notwithstanding all that has been written and said on this subject, there are thousands of Christians that have no clear, well-disgested idea of it. The subject should be studied more than it is. Christians should not rest satisfied with a mere vague, faint conception of it, but should "search the scriptures," that they may learn the truth as it is revealed in Christ.

In the contemplation of this subject, the first thing that arrests the mind, is an enquiry: what is the atonement? This is the most important point. It is the pivot upon which the whole subject turns. The design of the present discourse is to answer this question.

The word atonement occurs but once in the New-Testament, and, in this case, it is admitted by all Bible critics to stand as a substitute for the word reconciliation. Paul says, "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." It is obvious that the word atonement here means reconciliation. The tenth verse explains the eleventh, and makes the whole subject as plain as the light of day. On this passage, Dr. Barnes says, "It means the *reconciliation itself* between God and man; not the means by which

reconciliation is effected. It denotes not that we have received a *ransom*, or an offering, by which reconciliation *might* be effected ; *but that in fact we have become reconciled through him*. This was the ancient meaning of the English word *atonement*—AT-ONE-MENT—being *at one*, or reconciled.”

The Greek word which is here rendered atonement, is never used to denote an expiatory sacrifice. It is different from the word which in the Old Testament is rendered atonement. It simply denotes reconciliation. It is here used in the form of a noun, but it occurs in other instances in the form of a verb. “All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to-wit : that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. In these and other instances, in which the word occurs in the New Testament, it denotes reconciliation or restoration to the divine favor.

The word, which in our text is rendered reconciliation, is a different word ; and answers to the Hebrew word, which, in the Old Testament, is rendered *to make atonement*. It occurs in but one other instance in the New Testament, and that is the prayer of the publican. “God be merciful to me a sinner.” That is, *be propitious*: Dr. Robinson says, that the literal meaning of the word is, “*to propitiate as to sins, to make propitiation for sins*.” In a literal translation, our text would read thus :—“Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make pro-

propitiation or atonement for the sins of the people." Propitiation, expiation and atonement, are terms of similar import.

The following language of John is a beautiful comment upon the language of our text: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Christ is the great atoning sacrifice—the sin-offering. To atone is to reconcile, and no sacrifice that ever was offered to God, is so admirably adapted to move the heart, to lead to repentance and to God, as the sacrifice of Christ.

The word atonement not only embraces the idea of reconciliation, but also of purification or cleansing. The term has this signification in the Old Testament. This meaning of the word is in perfect harmony with the idea of reconciliation. Impurity is what separates the sinner from God; let him be cleansed and he is reconciled, *at-one* with God.

In the Scriptures the word atonement is sometimes used for the means of the atonement. Under the Mosaical economy, the typical sacrifices were the means; yet, according to a common figure of speech, they were called the atonement. The *name* of the *end* being applied to the appointed *means*. This is a common figure of speech in the Bible. Thus, God is called our salvation, that is, the author of it.—Exod. 15: 2.—Our life and the length of our days.—Deut. 30. 20.—Our strength, that is, the author of it. So Christ is termed our *salvation*—Isa. 43: 6.—*Life*—John 11: 25—and the resurrection. So he is

said to be *made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; that is, the author of these things. This principle should not be lost sight of in reading the Scripture, for the want of noticing this feature in scriptural language, has led many into serious error. Not noticing that the *name* of the end was sometimes applied to the *means*, they have been led to consider the *means* as the *end*. Hence, sacrifice, the means of the atonement, has been regarded as the atonement itself.

The atonement is the great work which Christ came to accomplish. This was the grand ultimatum of his mission. Hence, the language of the text: "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation or atonement for the sins of the people." The following language of Daniel is a beautiful comment upon our text: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." Christ was "made like unto his brethren," that by his teaching, example, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, he might establish a great system of divine truth, and set into operation causes through which man may be led to repentance, purified from sin, and reconciled to God. He came "to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity." Hence, it is said, that he "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Through him we receive "the wisdom which com-

eth down from above," are made righteous, sanctified and redeemed; "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Christ is a "faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God," that is, in the duties of his priestly office. The High Priest under the law, was a type of Christ, and Paul has pointed out the beautiful and striking analogy between the two: "The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went the High Priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost, this signifying that the way into the holiest of all, was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing; which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed upon them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come a High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Here the apostle has drawn the analogy between the High Priest under the old covenant and Christ. 1st. The High Priest was appointed to his office by God, so also was Christ: "No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So, also, Christ glorified not himself to be made an High

Priest; but He that said unto him, Thou art my Son; to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith, also, in another place, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." 2d. The High Priest was taken from among men, and "ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." One great duty of the High Priest was to offer gifts and sacrifices. In this he was a type of Christ; "For every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore, it is of necessity that this man (Christ) have somewhat to offer." It was necessary that he, as a priest, should have some offering or sacrifice to bring to the altar. Hence, he took upon himself "the likeness of sinful flesh," and gave "himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." Hence, said Paul, "We are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Christ is both the priest and the offering.

3d. Once a year the high priest entered alone into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice, "and sprinkled it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward, and before the mercy-seat seven times." This points us to the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. The holy of holies was a type of heaven, and the priests entering into it once a year, and the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice upon the mercy-seat, were typical of Christ's entering into heaven and his intercession for man. The high priest entered into the holy place, "not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people;" so "Christ, by his own blood, entered once into the holy place." "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the

true : but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us : not yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others ; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world ; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. "Under the law the priest offered sacrifice "year by year continually ;" but Christ "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God ; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

The atonement under the law was designed to cleanse from sin and reconcile to God. Both these ideas are brought to view in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. An atonement was made for the tabernacle, the holy place, the altar and congregation ; first, to cleanse and purify them, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions ;" and secondly, to reconcile them. Hence the expression, "reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, &c." When an atonement was made, the express design of it was to cleanse the people from their sins. This was the express design of the annual atonement as is evident from the following language : "For in that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." It is obvious from this that the object of the atonement is first to cleanse, and secondly to reconcile. When the sinner is cleansed from all sin, the cause of irreconciliation is removed, and the sinner is reconciled to God.

The design of the gospel atonement is to cleanse from sin and reconcile to God. Christ died, not to redeem us from the justice of God, but to redeem us from sin. He “gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.” The Jewish sacrifices were designed to purify the flesh—to cleanse the outward man,—but the gospel sacrifices to purify the “inner man”—to “purge the conscience.”

Sin is the great and only obstacle to forgiveness and salvation. This is insurmountable, so long as it exists. It can only be removed by its own destruction. Christ came into the world, lived, suffered, and died to destroy it. “He that commiteth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” “Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son, Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” This is the great design of the Gospel dispensation—the mission, teaching, example, miracles, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ,—to cleanse man from sin, and thus bring him into a state of reconciliation with God. *“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”*

Christ came into the world, not to reconcile God to sinners, but to reconcile sinners to God. Peter said, “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” Hence, said Paul, “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead be ye

reconciled to God." No language can be more explicit and unequivocal than this. For what purpose did God send his Son into the world? Paul answers, "to reconcile the world unto himself."

The design of the atonement, under the law, was not to appease or placate God. This is obvious from the fact, that an atonement was made for the altar, the tabernacle, the holy place, and the house of the leper. Surely God was not angry with these inanimate objects. So, under the new covenant, the atonement made by Christ is not designed to placate God, but is an expression of his love. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Instead of being an expression of wrath, it is an exhibition of mercy. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

The sacrifices under the law were not the atonement, but the means of the atonement. It was with them that the Priest made an atonement for sinners. So, under the Gospel dispensation, the sufferings and death are not the atonement, but the means by which it is accomplished. No where in the Scriptures is the death of Christ said to be the atonement. It is "*through*" him that "*we receive the atonement.*"

Paul said, "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." The Apostle is here evidently speaking of "remission" of sins under the law. Under this economy, none could receive "remission" or forgiveness without the offering of the sacrifices which the law provided. These sacrifices were designed to purify or cleanse the sinner. This

design is pointed out by God himself in the following statute: "On that day shall the Priest make an atonement for you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." The most of the sacrifices of the law were offered to cleanse the people from ceremonial uncleanness, and related only to "the outward man."—Heb. ix: 13. The sacrifices of the law were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and the blood of Christ, like the Jewish sacrifices, is designed, not to make God merciful, but to cleanse from sin—"to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God"—"to cleanse from all sin"—"to redeem us from all iniquity."—Heb ix: 14; x: 10.—1 John, 1: 7. The existence of sin constituted the necessity of the mission of Christ, and the removal of sin its glory.

Several objections are urged against the above views of the atonement—and I will now notice the most prominent ones: 1. The fact that Christ offered himself as "a sacrifice to God," is thought to prove that his death was designed in some way to make him more merciful. On this subject, we remark, 1st. That whatever is done in obedience to God's will, is said to be done unto him. Hence, it is said, that Christ "offered himself a sacrifice to God;" for he died in obedience to God's will. "I came not to do my own will," said Christ, "but the will of him that sent me." 2d. The expression that "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God," does not prove that Christ died as a substitute for sinners. Paul exhorts his Roman brethren to "present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God." Was their bodies offered as a substitute for the sins of their souls? To the Hebrews it is said: "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God

continually,—that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good, and communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” God was “well pleased with such sacrifices”—and why? Because it was in harmony with his will. The following language clearly explains the passage now under consideration: “But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you—*an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.*” The liberal donation that Paul received from the Philippians, was “a sacrifice, acceptable, well pleasing unto God,” because it was in accordance with his will. Were those “things which were sent” to Paul, and which were “an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing unto God,” a substitute for sinners? No! The death of Christ is said to be “an offering and sacrifice to God”—not because he died as a substitute for sinners, but because it was in obedience to the “will of him that sent him,” and was therefore “a sweet-smelling savor.” If the expression, “Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God,” proves that he died as a substitute for sinners, then “the sacrifices of a broken heart—the sacrifice of praise to God—the sacrifice of faith—and the offering of our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God,” are substitutes also.

2. Another prominent objection is that “Christ gave himself a ransom for us.” From this it has been confidently asserted that he died as a substitute for sinners, to redeem them from the justice of God—that his sufferings were an equivalent to the punishment due the sinner. The fact that Christ “gave himself a ransom for us,”

does not prove that he died as a substitute for the sinner, from the consideration that the inspired writers use the term in a figurative sense. It sometimes means simply deliverance: "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." That is, the Lord delivered Jacob from the hands of his enemies. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." Here the words "ransom" and "redeem" simply mean deliverance. "The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright." Did Solomon mean that the sufferings of the wicked should be a substitute for such sufferings as God could justly inflict on his penitent children? This will hardly be admitted. It is obvious from the above passages that the ransoming of the sinner is his deliverance from sin. The term "ransom" is sometimes applied to the means of deliverance, or redemption. "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom; Ethiopia and Seba for thee." By great sufferings brought on Egypt, God ransomed the Jews from slavery. In this sense of the term, any means by which man is delivered from suffering, may be styled a ransom. This proves that the phrase "he gave himself a ransom for us," does not mean that he died as a substitute for sinners; but that his sufferings and death is made the means of their redemption, or salvation from sin. The fact that we are said to be "bought" and "purchased" by Christ, is thought to prove that he died as a substitute for us. In answer to this, I remark that these terms frequently mean deliverance.—Psalms 74: 2; Exodus 15: 13, 16; Deut. 32: 6. In these passages the Lord is said

to "redeem," "purchase," and to have "bought" the Jews from Egyptian bondage. Do we understand from this that God suffered as their substitute, or that he paid the Egyptian Government a stipulated sum for their redemption? None understand the above language in this sense. The meaning is, he delivered them from their cruel bondage. Thus, when we are said to be "redeemed," "purchased," and "bought" by Christ, the obvious meaning is, he delivers and saves from sin.—Matthew 1: 21; Titus 2: 14.

4. It is said that Christ bore "our sins in his own body on the tree." It has been inferred from this that he died as a substitute for, and suffered the penalty due the sinner. In answer to this, I would remark, that different persons are said to bear the sins and iniquities of others. Ezekiel bore the iniquities of the house of Israel and Judah.—Ezekiel 4: 4, 6. Does this mean that the prophet suffered as a substitute, "in the room and stead" of the wicked Jews? Did he bear the penalty due their sins? This will hardly be admitted. No doubt the prophet bore great hardships and sufferings on the account of the Jews, and to reform them; in this sense Christ bore the sins of the human family. It was for the good of man and to effect his reformation. This sentiment is confirmed by the following language of the prophet: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." It was to heal man of all his spiritual diseases that Christ suffered and died.

The priests under the law were required to eat of "the meat of the sin-offering in the holy place," as being given to them

“to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make an atonement for them before the Lord.” Did the priest suffer as a substitute for, and bear the punishment due the wicked Jews? Aaron is said to “bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow, in all their holy gifts.” Are we to understand from this that Aaron suffered for, and bore the punishment due “the holy things?” Surely not; for the Lord never was wroth with inanimate things. It is obvious from the above considerations, that when Peter said that Christ “bore our sins in his own body on the tree,” he does not mean that he suffered as a substitute for sinners, but that he suffered to effect man, and, as he himself explains it, “that he might bring us to God.”

I have now presented what I understand to be the true Bible doctrine of the atonement, and, in conclusion, would remark, that the atonement is absolutely essential to our happiness in time and eternity. We must be reconciled to God if we would enjoy the blessings of salvation in time, and ultimately enter into the glorious “rest that remains for the people of God.” While unreconciled to God, we are destitute of that heavenly “peace which passeth all understanding,” and are exposed to “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” But if we believe in Christ, repent of our sins, are reconciled to God—brought into a state of sweet and holy communion with him—we shall enjoy the smiles of heaven, the consolations of the Holy Spirit, the fellowship of Christ, the sympathy of the holy angels, and when done with the scenes of earth we can calmly lie down on the bed of death, and in the sweet

composure of triumphant faith and hope, adopt the sublime and elevated strains of the poet :

“Ye golden lamps of heaven ! farewell, with all your feeble light;

Farewell ! thou ever-changing moon, pale empress of the night !
And thou, refulgent orb of day, in brighter flames arrayed,
My soul, which springs beyond thy sphere, no more demands
thy aid;

Ye stars are but the shining dust of my divine abode,
The pavement of those heavenly courts, where I shall reign
with God.”

And in the morning of the resurrection, when the thundering voice of the mighty Son of God shall break the slumbers of the tomb, we shall come forth from the dark charnel-house of death, clothed in a body “fashioned” like unto “the glorious body” of the blessed Christ, and unite with the redeemed of the Lord in singing, worthy is the Lamb “that was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests.”

DISCOURSE VI.

THE VARIOUS PURPOSES TO BE ACCOMPLISHED BY
THE MESSIAH'S DEATH.

REV. v: 9, 10.

Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests.

The history of Christ, from his birth in Bethlehem to his ascension from Mount Olivet, is full of deep and thrilling interest. He was ushered into the world amid the songs of the holy angels, lived a life unparalleled in the history of man, and expired amid a display of the most awful and sublime phenomena. No character ever appeared amid the scenes of earth, possessing such dignity, performing such sublime works, exhibiting such exalted virtue, and sustaining such a variety of deep and interesting relations to the whole human family, as the Lord Jesus Christ.

The subject of our present meditation and reflection is the Savior's death, and the great ends to be accomplished by it. What a deep and interesting subject here opens before us!—a subject in which the “angels desire to look into.”

I. What are the great ends for which Christ died?

Various purposes are ascribed to the sufferings and death of Christ, in the Scriptures. Dr. Paley has justly remarked, "that the death of Jesus Christ is spoken of in reference to human salvation, in terms and in a manner in which the death of no person whatever is spoken of besides. Others have died as martyrs as well as our Lord. Others have suffered in a righteous cause, as well as he; but that is said of him, and of his death and sufferings, which is not said of any one else. An efficacy and a concern are ascribed to them, in the business of human salvation, which are not ascribed to any other." The great, leading object of our Savior's mission, suffering, and death, is the salvation of man from sin. This is the grand centralizing point around which all other objects revolve. All other ends are subservient to this. This great and sublime truth is clearly and emphatically expressed in the sacred records. The evangelical prophet in speaking of the mission of Christ, and the great end to be accomplished by him, says: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." According to this interesting language, Christ came to strike off the chains of ignorance, superstition, and sin, that had so

long bound man down to the earth in almost hopeless bondage—to bind up the broken heart—to pour into the wounded soul the oil of joy and gladness—to awaken within man new and holier aspirations—to inspire him with a sublime and lofty hope. What a glorious work?

When we open the New Testament we read the same great truth written in characters of living light upon its luminous pages. Read the following beautiful passage from the lips of Christ: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Here Christ illustrates the great end to be accomplished by his mission and death, by a thrilling incident from the history of the Jews. For what purpose was the brazen serpent lifted up? "The Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." This was done that the dying Israelite might live. "EVEN so"—for the same purpose—"the Son of man was lifted up." Christ came, suffered, and died, that man "should not perish, but have everlasting life"—"that the world through him might be saved." As a comment upon the above passage from the teachings of Christ, read the following emphatic language of Paul: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus *came into the world to save sinners.*" In the following passage we learn what

he saves sinners from : "Thou shalt call his name JESUS : for he shall save his people from their sins." The teaching of Paul and Peter is in harmony with this language of "the angel of the Lord." Paul says of Christ, that he "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Peter says : "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers ; but with the precious blood of Christ." The salvation of man from sin is here represented as the great purpose for which he came into the world, suffered and died. "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Christ has beautifully illustrated the great purpose for which he came into the world, suffered, and died, in the parable of the lost sheep—Luke 15 : 3, 7. For what purpose did the shepherd leave his flock and go after that sheep which was lost ? That he might find it and save it from destruction. For the same purpose Christ left the bosom of his Father, came into the world, bled and died. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." It is obvious from the above considerations that the great end of the Messiah's mission and death was the salvation of man from sin, and his reconciliation to God. Hence, the redeemed of the Lord in heaven, are represented as singing, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and

nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests."

A radical error of the popular doctrine of the atonement is, that it is regarded as an expedient to deliver the Almighty from a conflict in his attributes. A distinguished defender of this doctrine says, that "it should be remembered that the salvation of the offender is not the chief end of the atonement, but the glory of God's public character. The atonement does this, even if not one soul was saved." Now, there is not a single passage in the whole Bible that says one word about the "chief end" of the Messiah's mission being "the glory of God's public character;" but throughout the Scriptures the salvation of man from sin is represented as the "chief end" of Christ's suffering and death. All that is said in the Bible on this point may be summed up in a single sentence which is most beautifully expressed by Paul: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acception, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." This great leading purpose implies other purposes, subordinate to this, which are clearly stated in the sacred records.

1. Christ suffered that the prophecies might be fulfilled—"that all things might be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning him."—Matt. 5: 17; Acts 3: 18. In the Hebrew Scriptures we have an unbroken chain of prophecy, reaching through the long period of four thousand years, in which the sufferings and death of Christ are clearly predicted; and if he had not suffered and died, these prophecies could not have been fulfilled, and his divine authority could not have been so clearly established as it now is.

2. Christ died to confirm, ratify, and seal the new covenant: "For where a testament is, there must, also, of necessity, be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise, it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." The old covenant was ratified and sealed with blood.—Heb. 9: 18, 20. It was in allusion to this, that our Savior said, when he instituted the memorial of his death, "This is my blood of the new-testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins."

3. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." —Luke 24: 46, 47.

4. Christ died as a witness to the truth: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world," said Christ, "that I should bear witness unto the truth."

5. Christ died that he might rise again; and thus clearly illustrate and confirm the doctrine of the resurrection and immortality. "I lay down my life," said Christ, "that I might take it again."—John 11: 25; Rev. 1: 18.

6. Christ died that he might prepare the way for the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit. "It is expedient for you," said Christ, "that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The question may be asked, how could the presence of the Spirit be of more advantage to the disciples than the presence of Christ himself? To this I answer, "that by his departure—his death and ascension—by having these great facts before their eyes—they would be led by the Holy Spirit

to see more fully the design of his coming than they could by his presence. While he was with them, notwithstanding the plainest teaching, their minds were filled with prejudice and error. They still adhered to the expectation of a temporal kingdom, and were unwilling to believe that he must die. When he had actually left them they could no longer doubt on this subject, and were prepared to understand the great end of his coming. Again: Christ while on earth could be present in but one place at a time; but in order to secure the salvation of man, it was necessary to have an agent that could be present in all places at the same time—who could attend all ministries, and apply the truth to all hearts, in all parts of the world.”—Barnes, on John 14: 15, 17.

7. Christ suffered and died, not only that he might rise “for our justification,” but that “he might enter into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”—Luke 24: 26; Act 5: 30, 31; Rom. 14: 9.

8. He died that he might be made a perfect Savior, perfectly adapted to the wants of man.—Heb. 2: 10; 5: 8, 9.

9. He died as the great antitype of the sacrifices of the old covenant.—Heb. 10: 3, 12.

10. He suffered to set us a perfect example.—1 Pet. 2: 21.

11. He died to remove the separating wall between the Jews and Gentiles—to slay the enmity of the human heart—to unite all the tribes of the earth in one great brotherhood—to inspire them with one spirit—to make them one even as he and his Father are one.—Eph. 2: 13, 16; Col. 2: 14.

12. Christ died to demonstrate the depth and strength

of his Father's love to man, and to give us the broadest possible grounds for confidence and hope.—Rom. 5: 8; 8: 32; 1 Pet. 3: 18.

I have now pointed out the various purposes to be accomplished by the death of Christ; and these are all subordinate to the one great purpose—the salvation of man from sin. Did Christ die that the Scriptures might be fulfilled? It was to accomplish the salvation of man. “To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” Did he shed his blood to seal the New Covenant? It was to secure the redemption of man from sin. “This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” Did he lay down his life that he might rise from the dead? It was for our salvation. He “was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” Did he die that he might open the way for the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit? This was to lead man to repentance and salvation. “When he (the Comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” Did he suffer that he might enter into glory? It was for our salvation. “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these—but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Did he suffer that he might be made a perfect Saviour? It was that man might be saved. “Be-

ing made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Did he suffer as the antitype of the sacrifices of the law? It was to redeem man from sin. "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Did he die to break down the partition wall between the Jews and Gentiles? It was done that God "in the dispensation of the fullness of time, might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance." Did he die to confirm the truth of the Gospel? It was that we might be sanctified "through the truth." Did he die to exhibit the depth and strength of his Father's love to man? It was that man might be led to repentance, and inspired with faith and hope in God. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Thus we see that all the purposes for which Christ died, are subordinate to the one great and sublime end—*the salvation of man from sin.*

But it is objected, that if the salvation of man from sin is all that Christ came to accomplish, it did not require a Savior of such dignity, and would not admit of such strong language as is applied to Christ. In answer to this I would ask, what is the greatest work that he can do for man? Of course, it is that which will be the greatest blessing to man—which will result in the most good to him. Now, I hesitate not to assert, that the greatest good that can be done for man, is to save him from sin—from the love of sin—to cleanse the heart—to purify the conscience—to make him holy—to inspire him with a spirit of devotion and love. This is an infinitely greater work than saving man from an outward hell; for man's happi-

ness, or misery, flows from within, and not from a foreign source. Save man from an outward hell, and take him to heaven, but leave him in unrepented sin, with an unsanctified heart, with all his sinful habits and grovelling aims,—and even amid the glories of heaven, the society of angels, the undying splendors of immortality, and the songs of the redeemed, he would be unhappy. It is a small consideration with him that he is saved from an outward hell, and that another has suffered in his stead,—for he carries a hell in his own bosom, that sheds its blackness over his spirit, even amid the glories and happiness of paradise. But, on the other hand, save man from sin, purify his heart, purge his conscience, inspire him with a devout and holy spirit, breathe into his soul the spirit of Christ, and even amid the darkness, gloom, and misery of hell, he would be proof against its torments. He cannot but be happy. He carries a heaven in his own bosom, that no foreign power can take from him. Then, we say, emphatically, that the greatest work that Christ can do for man is to save him from sin.

II. How are the ends for which Christ died accomplished? We have seen that the great end is the salvation of man from sin. “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” How is this great work accomplished? By effecting the reformation of man—by slaying the enmity of the heart—destroying the love of sin—subduing the rebellion of the will, and turning the sinner to God. Paul gives us the following beautiful comment on this point. “We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But, after that, the kindness and love of God, our

Savior, toward man, appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior." Here Paul explains how we are saved from sin: "By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." This great work is accomplished "through Jesus Christ our Savior."

By his mission, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, Christ has sealed the New Covenant, confirmed the truths of "the everlasting Gospel," imparted influences, given motives, and established a great system of religion, by which man is cleansed from sin, and reconciled to God. It is by these means that man is saved from sin. Hence, said Peter, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." The soul is "purified" from sin "by obeying the truth"—by a faithful use of the means of grace.

In the mission, suffering, and death of Christ, we have a glorious manifestation of the mercy of God, his abhorrence of sin, his approbation of virtue, and the love of his Son, "who suffered for us the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"—all calculated, in an infinitely higher degree than any former manifestation, to reconcile man to God. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh,—how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot unto God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" It is only by effecting the reformation of the sinner, that he can be saved from sin; he cannot be saved from sin by another suffering

the penalty due his sins. This may save him from an outward hell, but it cannot save him from sin itself—from the love, dominion, power, and practice of sin. If you wished to cleanse a drunkard from the sin of drunkenness, how would you go to work to accomplish it? By reforming him, by influencing him to break off from this sinful practice, and lead a new life. It is thus that Christ cleanses the sinner from sin, by leading him to repentance and reformation.

As the Gospel was established by the mission, suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ, of course all the blessings that we receive from it are to be ascribed to his blood. The blessings of Christianity are “shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.” No exhibition that God ever made of himself to the world, is so admirably adapted to lead man to himself, as the gift of his Son—nothing is so well calculated to subdue the rebellious will, melt the hard heart, and draw the affections of man to himself. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” “God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Here we behold the strength and depth of our Creator’s love for us, and the deep interest that he feels in man’s redemption and happiness.

In conclusion, let us pause and contemplate for a moment the death of the blessed Christ. What a thrilling and sublime scene arises before the mind! All that is grand, awful, and soul-stirring, clusters around the cross. Look yonder! What do I behold? The Lamb of God nailed to the cross between two malefactors, to darken his glory and blot his name! The Jews are his accusers,

and the Romans his executioners. The world is combined against him, and the disciples have forsaken him, in this dark hour of peril. What a scene! There hangs the blessed Savior between the heavens and the earth, as though he was an outcast of both, and unworthy of either. His temples are pierced with a crown of thorns, and the blood is running down his divine countenance. He is surrounded by a multitude of inveterate enemies, reviling him. Whilst the powers of darkness are thus combined against him, mocking and deriding him, and covering him with disgrace, nature herself steps forward, and with a mighty hand wipes off the disgrace that his enemies have heaped upon him, and sustains him in his majesty. The sun withdraws his light, and rolls back his mighty chariot, and midnight darkness spreads its robe of sackcloth over his brilliant disc, and shrouds the world in mourning. Earthquakes thunder from their Tartarean dens. The earth shakes, the rocks rend, the graves open, all nature is aroused, and here brings to a centre all that is awful and sublime in her realm, as the magnanimous sufferer expires. Hark!—what voice is that I hear? It is the voice of the blessed Redeemer: “Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani?—that is to say, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” What means that confusion yonder in the temple? “The vail is rent in twain from the top to the bottom,” and the Sanctum Sanctorum is thrown open to the view of the multitude. Again, the Savior cries, with a mighty voice, “It is finished,” and gives up the ghost.

“He dies, the friend of sinners dies!”

Can we turn away from the contemplation of this pathetic scene, with a hard heart and careless mind?

“Can we survey the scene of woe,
Where mingling grief and mercy flow,
And yet our hearts so hard remain,
As not to move with love or pain ?

I look, I gaze, my rebel heart,
Feels its own hardness soon depart ;
Repenting tears begin to roll,
And love in streams flows through my soul.

The cross I view—O wondrous love !
My sins expire—my fears remove ;
My wicked enmity is slain,
I'm reconcil'd—I'm born again.”

DISCOURSE VII.

THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST.

1 TIM. II: 5.

There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus:

There is a beautiful simplicity in all the arrangements of the universe, both in the kingdom of nature and of grace. How different are they from the plans and devices of man. Here we observe the truth of the divine saying, "my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Men have imagined that they could not sufficiently multiply the objects of religious adoration, and have fancied that they could not interpose too many friends, or mediators between their insignificance and the infinite majesty of heaven. Hence, we find, that man has multiplied the objects of worship, and crowded the access to the eternal throne with numberless mediators to solicit the mercy and forgiveness of God.

Men have multiplied the number of mediators until they have hid the face of the great Supreme, and their dependency upon Him has been forgotten. But in the beautiful simplicity of the mighty universe, which the imag-

ination of man cannot grasp, there is but one infinite, eternal, and omniscient God, who should be the object of all religious adoration ; and but one mediator. The simplicity of God's government rejects the crowd of mediators that man has introduced to shelter his weakness, and appoints but one mediator between God and man, one to be the medium of his communication to them and of their approach to him. There is but one on the throne, and but one before the throne. "For there is but one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

The whole system of divine government, both in the material and spiritual universe, is a sublime system of mediation, God carries on all the affairs of the universe by the means of agents. He does not create man by an immediate and direct act of his power. He calls him into existence by the agency of parents. He does not supply the wants of man by a direct act of his power—by sending down manna from heaven ; but through the agency of sunshine and rain, and a multitude of established causes. The blessings of the material universe come to us, not by a direct act of omnipotence, but through the agency of established laws. The physical blessings of life, that are essential to our happiness, flow to us through second causes. The fresh and blooming spring, the warm and glowing summer, the mild and lovely autumn, the cold and stormy winter, the sunshine and rain, the earth and the air, are all agencies through which the blessings of God flow to us.

All the blessings of life come to us through the medium of second causes. God does not infuse wisdom and knowledge into the mind of man, by a direct act of his

power. Our fellow men are made the medium through which we receive the blessings of knowledge and wisdom. We receive life, knowledge, support and safety through the labors and sufferings of others. Sometimes whole nations are rescued from oppression and ruin by the labor, suffering, and resolution of one individual. All the blessings of social, civil, and religious life, that we so richly enjoy, were secured to us by the labors, sufferings and toils of our predecessors. When the Lord would bless the human family he raises up human benefactors, and when he would chastise, he raises up enemies. He blessed the Jewish nation through the agency of Moses, Joshua, David, Cyrus, Josiah, and Daniel; and he inflicted punishment upon them by the hands of the Assyrians, the Philistians, the Bablylonians, and the Romans. The Lord has blessed the world through the labors of a Luther, a Zwingles, a Malancthon, a Calvin, a Wichliff, a Wesley, and a Channing.

The almost infinite variety of machinery that has lightened the toils of man, and added so much to the comfort and happiness of the human family, have come to us through the intellectual and physical labor of man. All the physical, intellectual, civil, and religious blessings of life come to us through second causes. Thus we see that the government of God is a great system of mediation.

When we assend from the system of divine providence to the economy of redemption we find the same principle of mediation. God bestows the blessings of his spiritual kingdom upon us through a mediation. He could, no doubt, have raised man from his fallen state, and elevated him to purity and immortal life by an immediate and di-

rect act of his omnipotence; but, for wise purposes, he chose to redeem him through the agency of a mediator. In this the plan of redemption harmonises with the economy of nature, and the great system of divine providence. There is a striking and beautiful analogy between the established method of divine providence, and the arrangements of the kingdom of grace. In his providence, God blesses us through the labor and suffering of our fellow men, and in the economy of redemption, he blesses us through the suffering and toil of his Son. Through him we are raised to holiness and heaven.

Christ is the great mediator between God and man. He is stiled the mediator in four different passages, 1st Tim. 2: 5; Heb. 8: 6; 9: 15; 12: 24. A mediator is one who acts between two parties. He is the medium of communication between them. Such a character is needed among men, not in the ordinary current of affairs; but when differences occur. Hence, a mediator has come to be stiled a *peace maker*, or one who affects a reconciliation between parties at variance. In this sense, the word may be applied to our Savior; for one great object of his mission was to reconcile man to God. Christ came to make men the friends of God, by destroying the enmity of their hearts, and inspiring them with a spirit of love and obedience to him. Hence it is said "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of the cross by him to reconcile all things unto himself."

But the word as applied to Christ is to be understood in a more extended sense. The word mediator as used in the New Testament means one who is the medium of

communication between God and man. An inspired writer in speaking of the Law of Moses says: "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." The following language of Moses explains this affirmation of Paul. "I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord." Moses was a mediator, not in the restricted sense of a peace maker, but as the medium of communication between God and the Israelites.

In this sense we are to understand the word as applied to Christ. This is the obvious meaning of the following passage. "He is the mediator of a better covenant." Now, as Moses was the mediator of the old covenant, or the medium through which it was communicated to the Jews, so Christ is the medium through which the New Covenant is communicated to man.

Christ is the chosen messenger of love, the great medium through which God communicates his instruction to man. It is through him God speaks to the world. "I will raise them up," said the Lord to Moses, "a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." The following language of Christ is a beautiful comment upon this prophecy: "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. As the Father hath taught me, I speak that which I have seen with my Father;" hence, said Paul, "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." "The law came by Moses," the mediator of the old covenant, "but grace and truth by Jesus Christ," who is the mediator of the new covenant. It is through Christ that God com-

municates his messages of love and mercy to the world. In him he speaks to us as a kind and tender parent, inviting us in the language of parental kindness to come to him and be saved.

Christ came from heaven to earth to bring a message of love and mercy to man—to publish the glad tidings of salvation to a perishing world. Hence, he is styled “the messenger of the covenant.” Paul calls him “the mediator of the New covenant.” Paul evidently means that he is the chosen messenger of mercy by whom it was brought.

It is in this sense that we are to understand our text. God has established a covenant with man, and pledged to him his promises. Christ, through whose instrumentality this is done, is for this reason called “The mediator between God and man.”

Christ is the medium through which all the blessings of the spiritual kingdom flow to man. As in the natural kingdom we receive the physical blessings of life through the operation of second causes, so in the spiritual kingdom we receive its blessings through the medium of our Lord Jesus Christ. “The washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, are shed on us through Jesus Christ our Savior.” “All spiritual blessings in heavenly places,” come through Christ. Through him “are grace and truth” revealed to the world. Through him we have redemption—through him are “repentance and remission of sins, peace with God,” and “the gift of eternal life.” All that we have received, pertaining to life and godliness, come to us through Christ. Through him we have received all that we know of the plan of salvation, and he has made certain all that we hope for. Except in Christ we have no moral and spiritual strength, no fixed and se-

cure principle of virtue, no hope of forgiveness and mercy. The revelation of God, contained in the sacred record, is our only foundation; and it is made to us through Christ. Through him God has revealed himself to man.

Christ is not only the medium through which the blessings of God flow to man, but he is also the channel through which man approaches God. He brings down from heaven the messages of love, mercy, and forgiveness; and bears up to God the offerings of men. He is the way, the truth, and the life. Through him God speaks to man, and man offers up his prayers to heaven. As all the blessings of the spiritual kingdom are conferred upon us through Christ; so all the services and sacrifices, which we are enabled to perform and offer up through the aid afforded to us by his gospel, should be presented to the Father in and through him.

Christ taught his disciples to ask in his name: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." As this is the prescribed form of prayer, let us enquire what is meant by it. We may learn what is meant by it by considering the sense in which the phrase is used in other instances. It is said that "Haggai, the prophet, and Zachariah, the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judea and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel." The obvious meaning is, that they spake by the authority of God. "The king, Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, write ye also unto the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name;" that is, by his authority. In the name of Christ, signifies by his authority, "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" That

is they did it by his authority. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." The obvious meaning is they were to be baptized by his authority. Christ said, "I came in my Father's name." That is by his authority. "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." As Christ came in the name or by the authority of his Father, so the disciples preached and wrought miracles in his name, or by his authority.

We are commanded "to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus." The obvious meaning is that we are to do all things by his authority, and in conformity with the spirit of his religion. To pray "in his name" is one of the things that we are to do, and must be interpreted in the same manner.

It is obvious from the above considerations, that to pray "in the name" of Christ, is to pray by his authority, in obedience to his commands, trusting in his promises, as members of the great family that he has brought nigh to God, and given access to the throne. We should pray as the disciples of Christ, guided by faith in him, and governed by the devout and holy disposition that he requires; "through him," that is through the directions that he has given for acceptable prayer, and the encouragements that he has given to sincere worshippers. To pray "in the name" of Christ is to pray by his authority, according to his teaching, and in the character and with the spirit of his disciples.

According to a common figure of speech, the name of a person is put for his doctrine or religion. Hence, it is said, that "Moses is preached every Sabbath day." The obvious meaning is, his religion is preached every Sabbath.

Paul said, "we preach Christ;" that is, his doctrine or religion. We are said "to put on Christ," "to be in Christ," "to profess Christ;" by which is evidently meant, that we are to embrace, adopt, to profess the religion of Christ. Thus, in the instance of prayer through Christ, we may understand, through his religion, his doctrine. It is through his religion, doctrine, instruction, promise, and encouragement, that we are enabled to come to God and worship him acceptably. It is through these that the heart is prepared, and we are led to the throne of mercy. We approach the mercy-seat, because the instructions and promises of Christ, lead us there. We approach the throne of mercy as his disciples, by his authority, and by faith in him. Coming in this character, gives us hope and confidence that our heavenly Father will hear and answer our petitions.

We might as well pray in the name of Numa, Zoroaster, or Mahomet, as in the name of Christ, unless we come to the throne as the disciples of Christ, according to his instructions, by faith in him, possessing the true spirit of his religion. It is this alone that can give us any confidence of being heard, when we approach the throne of God.

We are not to trust to the interposition of Christ alone in our prayers; but we must come in the true spirit of his disciples and according to his directions. Christ said, "Ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you;" that is, you are not to depend for acceptance on my intercession alone, but must come in the true spirit of my disciples; for he adds, "For my Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." From this, we learn that availing prayer in the name of Christ, is

that which comes from the hearts of those who love him. However, availing the intercession of Christ may be, it is promised to none but the honest and devout Christian. This agrees with the testimony of John. "Whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight."

The mediatorial office of Christ did not close with his life. His interest in the human race, did not cease with his labors on earth. When he passed from this to the spiritual world, he did not lose his sympathy and love for man. His labors and efforts for man's salvation, did not end with his toils on earth. His sympathy for man is as deep and ardent as when he wept over Jerusalem, or dropped the sympathizing tear with the sorrowing sisters, at the grave of their brother. Though he is surrounded by the glory and honor of heaven, and receives the adoration of angels, archangels, and the highest dignitaries amid all the ranks of the powers; yet he has not lost his sympathy for, and his interest in the salvation of the human race. His feelings have not changed with his state. He has not lost his solicitude for that work in which he lived, suffered, and died. His ardent devotion to the interests of his church, and the emancipation of the human family, from the thralldom of sin, did not expire with his life upon the cross. It is not to be supposed, that he who watched over the interests of his growing church, with such deep and thrilling interest, and sought for it the richest blessings of heaven, down to the time the cloud received him from human sight, should from that moment lose all interest in, and cease to intercede for it with God. This is unphilosophical and absurd. Can any one suppose that when Christ ascended

to heaven, that he not only lost all interest in his church, but all liberty of interceding with God for man? This is unreasonable to suppose.

When Christ ascended from earth to heaven, he passed into a higher and more extensive field of labor; where he is now actively engaged in laboring for the good of the universe of mind. He is still laboring for the salvation of man from sin. He still intercedes for them with his Father. He who prayed with such fervor and earnestness for his disciples while on earth, still continues his prayers in the presence of his Father. O! what a blessed thought?

This sentiment is in perfect harmony with all the teachings of the New Testament. According to the New Testament writers, Christ still fills the mediatorial office,—that he has a permanent connection with the human family,—that he is continually, in all ages, in all times, employed and interested in behalf of the human family,—that his kindness to the children of men is constantly operating,—that he never ceases to do good,—that he ever lives, and is ever active for mankind,—that he is through all time the active, efficient friend of man.

When Christ spoke of his death, he never spoke as though it would separate him from the interests and affairs of the human family, destroy all his connection with men, and close his efforts for their good. He looked at it as an event that would open the door of a nobler, wider, and more important field of labor, when he could contribute more extensively to the regeneration and salvation of man. "I go to prepare a place for you." "When I am lifted up I will draw all men to me." "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

After his resurrection, Christ never spoke of his work, as though he had finished it by dying and rising again; but he spoke as though he had a great work to do. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. So I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The apostles represent Christ as still interested in, and laboring for the good of man. According to them, he still fills the office of a mediator, and intercedes for man. Paul says, "that he is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. For Christ hath not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." John says, "If any man sin, he hath an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

As a reward of his humiliation, suffering, and death, Christ was exalted to the throne of universal empire, and all power in heaven and earth was given unto him. All the thrones, principalities and powers, in heaven and earth, were put under his juridical authority, and are amenable to him. All nature is subject to him. To his hands is committed the government of the kingdom of nature, providence, and grace. He is ever present, by his knowledge and power, with his people. He never forgets nor loses sight of the interests of the race, for which he labored, suffered, and died. He watches over the interests of the church, and intercedes for his people.

We are not told in the Scriptures in what the intercession of Christ consists; but we may form some idea of this from his history, as recorded by the Evangelists. Intercession signifies, to interpose in behalf of another, to a

third party, that has power to bestow favor. This may be done either by word or action. All that Christ has done for us by his life, suffering, death and prayers, are a part of his intercessory office. Though it may be understood in this general sense, yet it may be more strictly exact to confine it to intercessory prayer. This seems to be the more usual sense of the word in the Scriptures, and in our own language. The correct idea of Christ's intercession seems to me to be, that as he poured out his prayers, and sacrificed his life for the salvation of man, when on earth, so he does not forget, in his exalted state, to seek his benefit by his prayers, and thus expresses his deep interest in the happiness of those for whom he labored, suffered, and died.

In the pathetic, beautiful, and thrilling prayer of our Savior, recorded in the 17th chapter of John, we have a beautiful illustration of the intercession of Christ. This is a striking example of Christ's intercession for his disciples; and, in his prayer on the cross for his murderers, we have an illustration of his intercession for sinners. Prayer is the sincere and earnest desire of the soul ascending to God. The fervent and earnest desire of Christ for the salvation and happiness of man, is expressed in all his actions, and glows in the language of his prayers.

The intercession of Christ is in harmony with the method of God's operation in the kingdom of nature, providence, and grace. The vast universe of God is a great system of mutual dependence. Nothing stands alone. No being in the universe, aside from God, exists alone. All are dependent upon each other. Each individual is made to help his fellows, and to receive help from them. There is a mutual dependence throughout society. Even

the ponderous worlds, that roll through the extensive wilds of ether, are dependent upon each other, and are held in their respective orbits by mutual influence. Man is dependent upon another for his life, and all that renders it desirable and happy. The parent and the child, the teacher and the student, the king and the subject, the rich and the poor, are all essential to each other. When we look abroad in the universe of God, we find nothing that was made for itself alone; but all seems to have been made for the benefit of others. "No one liveth to himself."

The mediation and intercession of Christ are a part of this great and sublime system of dependency. It is one link in the great chain that binds all together. In harmony with the great universal law of kindness, God has ordained that his children on earth shall receive his blessings and favors through the mediation of his Son.

We behold the same principle in the operations of Divine Providence. With what complacency did the Lord listen to the earnest and importunate prayer of Abraham for the wicked city of Sodom. How often were the wicked Jews saved by the intercession of Moses. Job's friends were pardoned, at his interposition and prayer. The Lord hearkened to the prayers of David, Solomon, Samuel, Elisha,—and to all that came to him in faith and honesty of soul.

We find the same principle running through all the teachings of the New Testament. Here Christians are commanded to pray for one another, and instructed to make intercession for all men. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Thus we see, that the mediation and intercession of Christ, are in harmony with all the methods of divine operation and administration of the government of God. It is a part of a great universal system of mediation. The intercession of Christ rests upon the same foundation with prayer. They must stand or fall together.

The mediation of Christ is not designed to effect a change in the disposition of God. The intercession of Christ is not designed to change God from wrath to mercy. The love of God is the origin of the whole plan of salvation, and the intercession of Christ presupposes that he is merciful and willing to bestow his blessings on his children. The mediation of Christ is the appointed means through which the mercy of God is sought and flows to man. When I go to God in humble prayer, and ask him for the blessings that I so much need, it is not because he is unwilling to bestow them on me,—but for just the opposite reason. I go to him because he is mercifully disposed to bestow them upon me.

It is perfectly consistent with reason and revelation, that man, who is dependent upon God for his life, and all its concomitant blessings, should acknowledge his dependence upon the author of all good, by humble prayer. This is just and right in the nature of things. It is also right that man should pray, from the consideration that prayer brings us into a proper state to receive, appreciate, and enjoy the blessings of God. When man is in a proper state of mind to pray, he is in a proper state to receive and enjoy the mercy and forgiveness of God—and not till then.

Prayer has its foundation in the nature of things, and is calculated to bless and happify the soul of man. It

sheds a healthy influence over the soul. It tends to purify the heart, elevate and refine the thoughts, strengthen and enlarge the sympathies, subdue the passions, and bring man into close union with heaven.

The intercession of Christ is admirably adapted to awaken a spirit of gratitude in the soul, and promote the growth of religious affection. It is calculated to call out and cultivate the heart, and make men better. To know that we are thought of in heaven, and that our best, most benevolent, and devoted friend there, takes a deep and thrilling interest in our spiritual welfare, and makes mention of us to our heavenly Father, is calculated to excite a spirit of devout and grateful affection in the soul, to make us feel that we have to do with something better than the sins and follies of earth, that we are immortal—that we were created for a higher and nobler state than this—and that we ought to be holy, and cultivate those affections, sympathies, and virtues, that will prepare us for that sublime state.

The thought that a beloved friend, who is near and dear to us—whose heart is one with ours, and is deeply interested in our happiness, daily remembers us at the throne of mercy, and earnestly implores the blessings of heaven for us, is calculated to arouse us to earnest thought and action, that we may not be unworthy of the prayers thus presented, and forfeit the blessings so earnestly implored for us. How often has the thought that a pious and affectionate mother, was earnestly engaged at a throne of grace for him, aroused the wandering prodigal to reflection, and led him to repent, reform, and obey God's commands. The thought that the minister of the cross is deeply interested in their salvation, and earnestly prays

for them, has often led the thoughtless to reflection and to God. How often has the Minister, amid the toils, labors, and sorrows of life, been cheered and encouraged by the thought, that the devoted and faithful among his flock were imploring the favor and mercy of heaven for him. This thought is a balm to his soul. It animates and excites him to earnest and persevering effort to do good. Oh, then, how should the thought that he who is more than a friend, more than a brother, ever liveth in the presence of God, to make intercession for us, inspire our devotion, excite our zeal, quicken our improvement, console us in trouble, and encourage us, when doubtful and desponding! Oh, what a blessed thought, that we have a friend in the presence of the eternal throne, that never forgets us, and is ever earnestly engaged for our good! It should quicken into life and action the warmest affections and sympathies of the soul, and arouse us to earnest thought and action.

The intercession of Christ should arouse us to watchfulness. The thought that the blessed Christ is deeply interested in our salvation, and watches over us with such anxious desire, should awaken a deeper interest in our hearts, and make us more anxious for our soul's redemption. An habitual persuasion of this great truth, and daily meditation upon it, will, in the very nature of things, increase our interest and watchfulness; but, if we forget it, we will fall. Our faith will fail, if not secured and strengthened by grateful recollection of what is still done for us.

The intercession of Christ is a source of consolation and strength in the hour of temptation, sorrow, and affliction. When we feel our weakness and insufficiency—

when the world is dark and gloomy—when peace has departed from our hearts—when earthly friends forsake us—when the storm and tempest howl around us,—we may find this doctrine a soothing and strengthening power. We lean upon the arm of one who was tempted in all points as we are, and “was made perfect through suffering.” Though our friends may forsake us in the dark hour of peril, and we may be cut off from the sympathies of society, yet we have a friend in the presence of the Eternal Throne, that will never forsake us, and will never withdraw his sympathies from us. We gather strength from the assurance that we have the sympathy of Christ, who, in his humiliation, suffered for us; and now that he is exalted, does not forget us. “Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

O! what a blessed thought, that Christ lives to die no more—that he lives forever in the presence of God, the friend of man—that he lives, for sinners to save, and his followers to bless.

He lives, to still his servants' fears;
He lives, to wipe away their tears,
He lives, their mansions to prepare;
He lives, to bring them safely there!

Ye mourning souls, dry up your tears,
Dismiss you gloomy doubts and fears,
With cheerful hope your hearts revive,
For Christ, the Lord, is yet alive!

His saints he loves and never leaves;
The contrite sinner he receives;
Abundant grace will he afford,
Till all are present with the Lord!

DISCOURSE VIII.

THE PROPITIATORY, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

ROMANS III: 24—26.

Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

This is one of the most important passages in the sacred records. It comprehends the whole plan of human redemption—the origin, the medium, the condition, and the blessed results of salvation. The “grace of God,” is the fountain—“Christ Jesus,” the medium—“faith in his blood,” the terms—and justification, the glorious result. This passage is relied upon as the corner stone of the vicarious system of atonement. It is the grand rallying point of all the defenders of this system. From this consideration we shall carefully and candidly examine it, and if possible arrive at the true meaning of the inspired penman. Our only object is to learn the truth as it is revealed in Christ.

I. What does the Apostle mean by the phrase “being justified?”

1. Justification is a forensic term, and signifies the declaring, or pronouncing a person righteous according to law. Hence, said Paul: "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." That is, no person shall be declared righteous by the law, for all have transgressed it. Justification is the pardoning, or remitting the punishment due to sin. We are sometimes taught, that man suffers all the punishment due his sin, and that justification, or pardon, only saves him from the commission of sin in the future. But in the text, Paul speaks of "the remission of sins that are *past*." What does Paul mean by this? He is speaking of personal sins, and "remission" from such can only be a salvation from their consequence. Our Savior has beautifully illustrated this subject in the following instructive parable: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants; and when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents: but for as much as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant, therefore, fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. The Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt." How did this king forgive his servant? Did he compel him to pay the debt, and forgive him by preventing him from getting in his debt again? The plain idea is, that he gave up all claim against him, and let him go without paying the ten thousand talents which he justly owed the king. This elucidates and sets the doctrine of forgiveness in its true light.

2. We are justified or pardoned by the free and unmerited grace extended to us through Jesus Christ: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."—Tit. 3: 3, 7; John 3: 16.

3. None but believers are justified and saved from the fearful consequences of sin. Hence, said Paul: "To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Who is justified? "He that believeth in Jesus."—Rom. 5: 1. None but believers in Christ shall be saved: "This is the will of him that sent me," said Christ, "that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." "Everlasting life" is proffered on the condition of faith in the Son of God. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

II. For what purpose did God send his Son into the world?

"To be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Instead of "propitiation," Archbishop Newcome translates "mercy seat;" and Dr. Macknight, "propitiatory." The original word is the same which in the Old Testament is rendered "mercy seat." The apostle, no doubt, alludes to the mercy seat in the most holy place—Exod. 25: 17, 22. The mercy seat was a beautiful type of Christ:

1st. It was the place of God's special presence. God dwells in Christ: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me," said Christ, "the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works."

2d. It was the place of merciful manifestations. In Christ, God manifests his love and mercy to man. "God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."—2 Tim. 1 : 9, 10.

3d. It was the medium of communication between God and his people. Christ is the medium of communication between God and man. It is in Christ that God reveals himself to the world. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."—2 Tim. 1 : 10. It was through Christ that the great plan of salvation was fully developed to the world. This office of Christ was clearly pointed out by Moses.—Deut. 18 : 15, 19.

4th. It was at the mercy seat that God met with ancient Israel : and it is in Christ that God meets with man. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself ; for through him we have access by one spirit unto the Father." Christ is our propitiatory or mercy seat. He is the medium through which we approach our heavenly Father.

There are two other passages in which the word propitiation occurs—1 John 2 : 2 ; 4 : 10. Propitiation and atonement are words of similar import. To atone is to reconcile, to propitiate, to make overtures of peace. Propitiation is a reconciling sacrifice. Christ is "set forth to be a propitiation for our sins ;" that is, he came to reconcile man to God : "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Propitiatory is something adapted to reconcile, or intended for that purpose ; something *on* which, *from*

which, *in* which, *by* which, or *through* which, overtures of peace are made." In the text, the Apostle represents Christ as "set forth" as a propitiatory, or mercy seat, *in*, *from*, or *through* which God might manifest his mercy and love to man.

2. "To declare the righteousness of God for the remission of sins that are past; through the forbearance of God." "The righteousness of God" is an ambiguous term; it may mean the righteousness of God's own character, or the righteousness which God requires of his creatures. Peter uses the term "righteousness of God," to denote his faithfulness to his promises—1 Peter 1: 1. The word also occurs in the following passages: Matt. 6: 33; James 1: 20; 2 Cor. 5: 21; Rom. 1: 17—10: 3. By the "righteousness of God," in the above passages, I understand the Apostle to mean, the righteousness which God requires of man. The word occurs five times in the third chapter of Romans. In the 22d verse, the Apostle explains what he means by this phrase: "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ." According to this explanation of the Apostle, "righteousness of God," means the righteousness which He requires of man. That this is the meaning of the Apostle, is obvious from the following language, which he uses on another occasion: "That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Christ was "set forth" as "a teacher sent from God" to publish to the world the righteousness which God approves and requires of man. 1st. By his example—1 Pet. 2: 21, 23. 2d. By his teaching. Christ's Sermon on the Mount is a

lucid declaration of the righteousness which God requires of man under the Gospel.

This righteousness was "declared for the remission of sins that are past." Christ clearly taught what man must be before he can receive the forgiveness of his sins.—Matt. 18: 3; Luke 13: 1, 5; Matt. 5: 8; Mark 16: 15, 16.

III. This righteousness was declared: "That God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Christ came into the world to reveal the conditions upon which God can be just, and yet pardon the sinner. God could not be just, and yet the justifier of the impenitent; but he can be just, and yet justify the penitent. The justice of God does not stand in the way of his pardoning the humble, penitent, believing sinner. He can, and has promised to forgive him. The pardoning of the penitent is in strict accordance with the justice of God. Hence, said Solomon: "Who so walketh uprightly, shall be saved; but he that is perverse in his ways, shall fall at once." This agrees with the experience of David, as recorded by himself: "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

From the mercy seat, under the law, God delivered or declared his oracles, and granted his favor to Israel through the High Priest. The antitype of which, as we have seen, is Jesus Christ. He is the true mercy seat, from or by whom God speaks, and shows mercy to the world. One declaration that He makes from it is, that He can be just when He justifies him that believeth in Christ. Read this declaration, as written by the pen of

inspiration: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This idea is very different from the one that the popular system of atonement gives, "that God sent him forth to justify himself in showing mercy to sinners."

His righteousness was also declared "for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." According to this language, one great purpose for which "the righteousness of God" was declared, was the remission of sin. This proves that the phrase, "righteousness of God," means the righteousness which he requires of man, in order to the remission of sins; for what inspired writer ever preached the personal righteousness of God for the remission of sin? And who, among all the preachers of the Gospel, ever preached it as a condition of forgiveness? John, the Baptist, preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." The Apostle preached, that men should "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Peter declared to the house of Cornelius, that to Christ "give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins." On another occasion, he exhorted his audience to "repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out." Such was the preaching of the apostles. They never preached the personal righteousness of God, for the remission of sins; but faith, repentance, and obedience, were what they preached as conditions of forgiveness.

One great purpose of the mercy seat, under the law, as connected with the sin offering, was the "putting away of sin," "cleansing," or "purifying," from sin, and thus

bringing men near to God. This was typical of Christ. One great purpose of God's setting forth his Son as the Gospel mercy seat, and for which he died, was the putting away of sin, and the reconciliation of man to himself. Christ "hath appeared once in the end of the world, to *put away sin* by the sacrifice of himself." "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Here, what Christ came to effect, is spoken of as accomplished; because his teaching, suffering, and death, were intended to "purge our sins," and will have that effect on all who receive and obey him.

The great end of all the declarations that are made from the Gospel mercy seat, is the salvation of man from sin—from the love, power, and practice of sin. This is the great end of all the manifestations that God has made of himself to the world, and it was for this that Christ came into the world, to "save his people from their sins." But how does he accomplish this great work? What are the instruments that he uses to effect the great end for which he left the bosom of his Father, and came into the world? Sin is a moral disease, and can only be removed by moral means. The means must be adapted to the end. The word of God is the great instrument used to accomplish this work: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." This agrees with the language of Peter: "Seeing ye have purified your souls, in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure

heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." It is obvious, from the above language, that the Gospel is the great means used by Christ to turn man "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ." Hence, said Paul: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

God speaks to us from the Gospel mercy seat, not as a vindictive sovereign, but in the melting voice of a kind, affectionate, and forgiving Father. His is the voice of love and paternal kindness. In the outward universe, God manifests himself to us in love. The fresh and blooming spring, the warm and glowing summer, the mild and lovely autumn, the cold and stormy winter—the genial rays of the sun, the refreshing shower, the music of the breeze—speak to us of the exuberant goodness of God; but in Christ he is revealed as our Father. Moved with the tenderest feelings of a parent, He manifests the most earnest solicitude for our salvation, and yearns over us as a tender parent over an erring child. With a Father's kindness he points out the awful and tremendous evils of sin, and opens the way for our escape. He has declared from the mercy seat, the terms of salvation—the righteousness that is essential to forgiveness and redemption—and calls us, in the melting strains of bleeding mercy, to come to Christ and be saved.

Sinner, the voice of God regard ;
 His mercy speaks to-day ;
 He calls you by his sovereign word,
 From sin's destructive way.

His love exceeds your highest thoughts !
 He pardons like a God !
 He will forgive your numerous faults,
 Through our Redeemer's blood.

Return, O wanderer ! now return—
 And wipe the falling tear ;
 Thy Father calls—no longer mourn !
 'Tis love invites thee near.

Christians ! God speaks to you from the mercy seat as a loving Father : "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him : for he knoweth our frame—he remembereth that we are dust." "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Oh ! my Christian friends, live near to the throne of grace ! Daily commune with your Heavenly Father at the mercy seat. He will assist you in your struggles for the mastery of evil, and the attainment of virtue, and will bring you off "more than conquerors, through him that loved us," and hath "given himself for us."

DISCOURSE IX.

FORGIVENESS.

JER. XXXVI: 3.

It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them ; that they may return every man from his evil way ; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” All men are sinners. Reason, nature, the history of the world, revelation, and the consciences of all men, attest this fact. All feel that they are sinners. “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.” The Psalmist has recorded the result of the heavenly inspection. “They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” Sin has plunged man into misery, and exposed him to “eternal damnation.” The most solemn and important question then is, how is he to be forgiven ? The mercy of God is his only reliance. How is this mercy to be obtained ? This question has been anxiously asked, in all ages. Reason and nature, superstition and philosophy, have been tasked in vain, for an answer to this thrilling question. The Scriptures alone can answer it. They

have answered it ; and our present enquiry is, what is the answer ? What are the conditions of pardon ? The answer is found in the language of the text : “It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them ; that they may return every man from his evil way ; *that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.*”

There is a great and fearful obstacle in the way of God’s forgiving the sinner. There is something that separates between the sinner, and the forgiveness of God—and the great question is, what is it ? There is nothing on the part of God to prevent his extending mercy and forgiveness to rebel sinners. “Behold,” said the prophet, “the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save ; neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear.” The obstacle in the way of forgiveness, is all on the part of the transgressor. It is his sins that rise up as a brazen wall between him and the mercy and forgiveness of God. “Your iniquities,” said the prophet, “have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” From this we learn, that it is sin that prevents God from extending mercy and forgiveness to the sinner. Hence, the language of the text : “It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way ; that I may forgive their iniquity, and their sin.” The expression, “**THAT I MAY FORGIVE,**” implies that there was something that prevented God from extending mercy and forgiveness to “the house of Judah,”—and, what was it ? The Lord answers their “evil way.”

The question now is, how is this obstacle to be removed? We find an answer to this question in the following language of the prophet: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

According to this language, the obstacle to forgiveness is removed, by the reformation of the sinner. From the text we learn, that the design of God's message to "the house of Judah," was to influence them to "return every man from his evil way." And why? "That I may forgive their iniquity, and their sin." Not a word is said about inflicting the punishment due their sins, upon a substitute "that God may forgive them." The sole object is their reformation—that God "may forgive them." This leads to the position, that God pardons the sinner on the condition of his repentance and reformation. God, of his own infinite goodness, extends mercy and forgiveness to the humble penitent. He is essentially merciful and placable. This sublime truth is beautifully expressed by an inspired writer—"God is Love." How can it be said that "God is love," if he does not, and will not, extend mercy and pardon to the believing, humble penitent, without punishing the innocent "in his room and stead?" Is this love and mercy? To illustrate the idea, suppose that a son transgresses the commands of his father, but afterwards repents, reforms, and comes to his father, humbly begging his mercy and forgiveness. The father refuses to forgive him until he inflicts the punishment due his transgression, on one of his innocent children. Can it be said of that father, that he "is love?" No! Just such a father is God, if he refuses to pardon his humble, penitent child,

until his only "begotten and beloved Son" suffers the penalty due his sins. The idea is revolting to the benevolent mind.

That God is essentially merciful and placable of himself, independent of any foreign cause, is obvious, from the following beautiful passage of Scripture: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." No language can be more plain, pointed, and unequivocal than this. Here God is represented as being "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy," from his own essential goodness. "Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption."

We are to forgive one another on the same principle that God forgives us. Our Savior taught his disciples to pray: "Our Father, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Now, if God forgives us only on the grounds of a vicarious atonement, we are bound to forgive those who trespass against us, on the same principle. Then, before we can forgive a brother that trespasses against us, we must inflict the punishment due his sin, on another. Who ever imagined that this was the true meaning of our Savior's language? What are the conditions upon which we are to forgive those who trespass against us? Christ answers: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." It is on condition of his repentance, that we are to forgive him. Now, if this is the condition upon which we are to forgive our

brother, that trespasses against us, and God forgives us on the same condition, it follows, with all the force of demonstration, that God forgives the sinner on condition of his repentance and reformation. This sentiment is beautifully expressed in the following language of the Lord himself: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin." The conditions which God forgives the sinner, is here plainly marked out. It is that they "humble themselves, and pray, and seek the face of the Lord, and turn from their wicked ways." Hence, said Solomon, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy." It is in view of their confessing and forsaking their sins, that God says, they "*shall have mercy.*"

Our Savior has beautifully illustrated the doctrine of forgiveness, in the pathetic parable of the prodigal son. This parable clearly illustrates two great and thrilling truths. 1st. That God is "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy;" ever ready to forgive the humble penitent. When the penitent prodigal was "yet a great way off," the father ran, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him. This is a striking illustration of the loving and forgiving character of our heavenly Father.—2d. That God forgives the sinner, on the condition of his repentance and reformation. The father of the prodigal was ready to forgive all his sins, and receive him to his embrace, just as soon as he would repent and return to him. It is on the same condition that God forgives his rebel children, and receives them to the embraces of his love. "*If we confess our sins, he is FAITHFUL and JUST*

TO FORGIVE *us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" It has long been thought that God could not be faithful to himself, and just to his government, if he pardoned the sinner on the condition of his repentance and reformation; but John settles this great question, in the above language, and declares that he is both "FAITHFUL and JUST," in thus forgiving the sinner—"faithful" to his promises, for he has promised to forgive, on these conditions.—Isa. 55 : 6, 7. He is "just" to himself, to his government, and to the universe; for, it is in strict accordance with the plainest dictates of reason, to extend mercy and forgiveness to the humble penitent. This is the sentiment of the Bible. The prophet expresses it as clearly as any sentiment can be expressed. He first points out the fearful consequences of sin—"the soul that sinneth it shall die." He then points out the condition of pardon: "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness which he hath done, he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God? and not that he should return from his ways and live?" From this unequivocal language, we learn, that all that God requires, as a condition of pardon and salvation, is the repentance and reformation of the sinner—"for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live." On a certain occasion, Peter said to the Jews, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted." Why? "That your sins may be blotted out."

I read this great and sublime truth in the expressions ; “He came to save his people from their sins ; God sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” Why was it necessary to “turn man from his iniquities ; to save him from sin ?” The Lord answers, “that I may forgive their iniquity and their sins.”

There are many instances of forgiveness recorded in the scriptures, and they all confirm the great truth which I am laboring to establish. The denizens of Nineveh were pardoned on the conditions of their repentance and reformation.

It is objected, that if God pardons the sinner on the conditions of his repentance, and reformation alone ; it declares that his law is not just. The law says that the sinner must die. From this it is inferred, that “in pardoning the sinner, God would declare that the law is not just ;” from the fact that he saves the sinner from death. This reasoning goes equally against all methods of pardon. If it proves any thing, it proves that God cannot pardon on any condition, without violating his law. The sinner may believe in atoning blood, and be pardoned through its efficacy, still there is the law, that says the sinner shall die. The law never said that a substitute might die in his stead,—it said the sinner should die. “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” The law makes no provisions for a substitute dying “in room and stead” of the sinner. The threatenings and promises of God are conditional. The Lord teaches us that he will punish the sinner only for his own sins, and his continuance in sin ; but that, if he will repent and turn from his sins, “he shall surely live, he shall not die.” So far from violating his law, in pardoning the sinner, He only executes

it. If He did not pardon him, He would violate His law, and "declare that the law was not just." By pardoning the penitent sinner, God sustains his law, His faithfulness and justice. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."*

Again, it is objected, that the promises of mercy and forgiveness to the penitent, are made on the grounds of the atonement, and that the penitents anterior to the death of Christ were forgiven in view of that event. In answer to this, I would remark, that this is a mere assumption. No where in the Bible, is this fact stated. The passage commonly brought to prove this position, is Rom. 3 : 25 ; 26. The phrase, "for the remission of sins that are past," which is found in this passage, is supposed to refer to the above position. The Apostle is here evidently speaking of personal sins. All sins are past, and it is only such that can be forgiven. Sins that have not been committed, cannot be pardoned ; for they have no existence until committed.

It is also objected, that if it is just, it is not safe to pardon the sinner, on the condition of his repentance and reformation. It is asserted that it would subvert the divine government, and fill the earth with anarchy and violence. Beecher says, that such a principle "would break the power of every human government on earth." Let us examine the theory of a vicarious atonement, and see if it is any better than the above. Let the human governments apply the principle of a vicarious atonement in their administrations, and punish the innocent "in the room and stead" of the guilty,—what would be the result? Would it strengthen their foundations, and promote peace among men? No! "It would break the pow-

er of every human government on earth," and fill the world with violence and anarchy. The objection bears with as great force against the doctrine of a vicarious atonement, as it does against the principle of forgiving men on the conditions of their repentance and reformation. There is a vast difference between divine and human governments. "The ruler is different, the object is different, the sanctions and the consequences are all different. Man looks upon the outward conduct, God looketh upon the heart, and the purposes of his administration are to affect the heart. To uphold the community, to protect property and life, is the aim of one; to purify the soul, and save from the power and condemnation of sin, is the object of the other. It would not be safe for ignorant and fallible men, to pardon offenders on the profession of repentance—but it is safe for the *omniscient God*, who sees the sincerity of the profession, the reality of the reformation. His government cannot be endangered by encouraging transgressors to turn from their transgressions. This earth would not be "turned into a hell," by becoming the abode of the penitent pardoned, the reformed, submissive, obedient, virtuous children of their heavenly Father. Would it "break the power of every human government on earth" to lead all men to repentance and reformation? to influence all men to break off from lying, swearing, drinking, stealing, murder, war, revenge, licentiousness, extortion, and all the vices of the earth? No! It would strengthen human governments, and promote peace and happiness among men. It would convert the world into a paradise.

Another objection is that repentance "does not cancel the past." It does not in this life. Sin may be forsaken,

but its consequences go on, and are felt in injured health, and a torturing conscience. True—and a most solemn truth. But, it belongs not more to our system, than to the opposite. The consequences of sin must be felt under any system. Let the obdurate offender obtain the assurance of pardon through faith in a vicarious atonement—will that “cancel the past?” Will it restore health to a diseased body? Will it repair the injuries that the sinner has done to society? Will it stay the evil influences that he has set in operation? Will it restore the years that he has spent in sin? Will it blot the past out of his memory? The past cannot be effaced, it cannot be forgotten. It must, and necessarily will, have its effect.

Again, it is objected, that the doctrine of pardon on the condition of repentance, begets a feeling of self-righteousness and merit. The idea that we can merit salvation, is opposed to both reason and revelation. “We are saved by grace.” Repentance and reformation are only the conditions upon which God, of his own goodness, extends mercy and forgiveness to the penitent sinner. The advocates of the popular theory make faith a condition of salvation; and, with equal propriety, it may be urged against their theory, that it will beget a feeling of self-righteousness and merit. The sinner, who believes in a vicarious atonement, and relies for salvation on it, depends as much on his own act, as the one who receives forgiveness, on the terms of repentance and reformation, through divine mercy.

It is also objected, that God forgives the sinner, “for Christ’s sake.”—Eph. 4: 32. It is contended from this, that God forgives the sinner, in view of the satisfaction that Christ has made to the law. The original of the

above passage is, *in or through Christ*. Christ is the medium through which the blessings of salvation are bestowed upon man. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his *mercy* he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,—*which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior*;" "*that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*" From this we learn, 1st. That Jesus Christ is the medium through which the blessings of heaven flow to man, 2d. That we are "saved by his mercy," and "justified by his grace." These blessings are bestowed upon us by God, of his own goodness and mercy. "But God, who is rich in mercy, *for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ*, (by grace ye are saved,) that in ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, *through Christ Jesus.*" It "*was for his great love wherewith he loved us; even when we were dead in sins, that he quickened us,*" and not in view of the satisfaction which Christ made to the law—yet this was bestowed on us "through Christ." If God forgives us on the principle of a vicarious atonement, then we are to forgive one another on the same principle, "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Now, if this language means that God forgives the sinner because Christ has suffered the penalty due his sins, then before we can forgive a brother that has trespassed against us, we must inflict the punishment due his sins, on an innocent brother, and forgive him, in view of what this brother has suffered. Apply this principle to the government of the Church, and what would be the result? Unmixed evil.

I have now presented the true grounds upon which the sinner may receive the forgiveness of his sins, and become an "heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ." O! sinner, will you lay hold on the promises of the Gospel, and secure the rich boon so freely offered to you? All heaven is interested in your salvation. God is moved with the tenderest feelings of a kind and affectionate Father—Christ yearns over you with the warmest feelings of his benevolent heart—the holy angels are animated with deep and ardent sympathy for you—the Gospel opens to you its rich store "of exceeding great and precious promises,"—calling upon you, in the melting strains of bleeding mercy, to "repent that your sins may be blotted out," and your "names written in the Lamb's book of life." Oh! will you repent, reform, shun the miseries of the wicked, and secure the blessings of holiness and virtue? Will you listen to the claims of justice, the melting calls of mercy, and the invitations of heaven? "Thinkest thou this, O man, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or, despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hard and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life; but, unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."

DISCOURSE X.

REGENERATION.

TITUS III : 5.

He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Christianity is a remedial system. It proposes to effect a permanent change in the moral character of man. The great object of its mission, is the regeneration of man's moral and spiritual nature. It is a great system, introduced into the world by God, to redeem man from the thralldom of sin, to destroy the selfishness and wickedness of his heart, to make him a new creature, to inspire him with new and holier principles, to awaken within him new desires, to place his thoughts and affections upon nobler and more elevated objects than the things of earth, to establish the kingdom of goodness, love, benevolence, and truth, in the soul ; to elevate him from the groveling pursuits and ends of sinfulness, to a new and noble field of action, and to the sublime station in the scale of being, for which he was created. Such is the glorious mission of Christianity.

I. *What is regeneration ?*

Regeneration is an internal spiritual change, effected in

the moral or spiritual nature of man, by the agencies which God has ordained for its accomplishment. It is a radical change of man's moral nature—a complete change of the affections, sympathies, desires, thoughts, and purposes of the soul. They are taken from the groveling objects and ends of earth, and placed upon “things above”—upon pure, holy, sublime, and elevating objects,—and the great purpose of the life is changed.

Regeneration changes the desires of the heart. The regenerate no longer desires the possession of sinful objects, nor to indulge in things that are wrong. The desire of his heart is the attainment of virtue, moral excellency, and all those graces that adorn the Christian character. The revengeful character desires to execute his vengeance on the object of his hatred ; but the regenerated man desires to do good unto all, and to manifest nothing but love to his bitterest enemies. The man of pleasure desires to indulge in his sinful amusements ; but the Christian has no desire for sinful indulgences. The desire of his heart is to be transformed into the image of Christ. Thus you see, that regeneration changes the desires of the soul.

Regeneration purifies the affections. It shakes the soul loose from its attachment to the things of time, and places the affections upon “things above.” They are taken from sinful objects, and placed upon God, and all that is holy, sublime, and good.

Regeneration changes, renovates, and elevates the thoughts. It takes them away from the contemplation of groveling and demoralizing objects, and places them upon pure and elevating objects. The thoughts of the licentious character are employed upon sordid and licentious objects ; but, in the regeneration of his heart, they are ta-

ken from these unholy objects, and placed upon God, upon Christ, upon heaven, and upon things of an elevating nature.

Regeneration changes the sympathies of the soul. The sympathies of the unregenerate are not with the holy, the virtuous, and the good ; but, with the unholy, and the vicious. In regeneration, the sympathies of the heart are purified, enlarged, and deepened,—and unites with Christ all the virtuous and the good. The unregenerate can laugh at the sufferings of the innocent, and trample the defenceless in the dust ; but the regenerated soul deeply sympathizes with the suffering, weeps with those that weep, mourns with those that mourn, rejoices with those that rejoice, and labors for the good of all. The sympathies of the unregenerate are narrowed down to their associates ; but the sympathies of the regenerated soul embrace all men.

Regeneration changes the ruling love of the soul. In every character there is a ruling love, a predominant aim, one master principle, that rules the life, and moulds the character. This ruling love is different in different characters ; but, in the sinner, this predominant, ruling principle is wrong. The ruling principle in the character of the miser, is the love of gold—in the man of pleasure, the love of amusements—in the drunkard, the love of intoxicating drinks—in the warrior, the love of fame—in the selfish, the love of self—in the gambler, the love of gaming—in the licentious, the love of sordid indulgences.

Now, in regeneration, this ruling love, or predominant principle of the heart, is changed. The man of pleasure is no longer governed by the love of sinful amusements. The love of intoxicating drinks is slain in the heart of the inebriate. He forsakes his cups, because he no longer

loves them. The warrior forsakes the tented fields, and bloody scenes of war—the gambler ceases his gaming, and the licentious his sordid indulgences, because the love of these things is destroyed; they are governed by a new principle,—love to God and man.

This great work is called a new birth, a new creation, a resurrection, and regeneration,—because it is a resurrection to, and the commencement of, a new life, a new love, new desires, and a new purpose, or object of action. The regenerated character is a new man in desire, affection, love, sympathy, thought, word, and action. The powers of the man are changed from their perverted action, and directed into their proper channel.

Being born of the flesh, we bear the image of the earthy; but, by being born of the Spirit, we receive the image of the heavenly. By virtue of our natural birth, we dwell on earth, and receive the powers that qualify us for the enjoyment of the society and blessings of earth; but, by being born of the Spirit, we are inducted into the kingdom of God, and receive the moral and spiritual qualities that are necessary to prepare us for the society and blessings of heaven. By our natural birth, we are heirs of a temporal life; but, by our spiritual birth, we are made heirs of eternal life.

II. *The effects of regeneration upon the character of man.*

Christianity cleanses the fountain of action; and, of necessity, the stream is pure, for it must partake of the nature of the fountain. The tree is made good; and, as a necessary sequence, the fruit is good also.

Christianity commences the great work of regeneration, upon philosophical principles. It commences its work

at the fountain of action. It reforms the life, by reforming the soul. It regulates the conduct, by regulating the principle of action. It governs the conversation, by governing the thoughts.

Regeneration produces a new life. The regenerated man is a new creature, in thought, word, and action. He lives a new life—a life of prayer, obedience, and love. He has “put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Hence, said Paul to his Roman brethren, “Ye were the servants of sin ; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” They walk no more “after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made them free from the law of sin and death.” “Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away ; behold all things are become new.” He is governed by new principles, and leads a new life. “Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in him ; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not ; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.”

The heart of the unregenerate may be compared to a garden overgrown with briars, thorns, thistles, and all kinds of noxious productions. The husbandman goes to work, and eradicates them, and sows in their stead flowers, and useful and beautiful plants. The heart of the unregenerate is overrun with a growth of living lusts. There are the pestiferous plants of sin, and the grapes of Sodom.

"The works of the flesh are manifest; which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like." In regeneration, the fallow ground is broken up, the roots of bitterness are eradicated, the luxuriant growth of lusts is destroyed, new seeds are sown in the garden, and a new class of fruits is produced. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

III. *Is regeneration an instantaneous or gradual work?*

The work is instantaneous, in reference to the time of its commencement; but gradual in its completion. There is a moment when it commences, but it takes time and arduous labor to accomplish the work. Reason and revelation teach us that this is a gradual process.

When we look abroad over the physical universe, we find that every thing is produced by a gradual growth. In the vegetable kingdom, there is, first, the seed; then the shoot, then the tree. The tree is not the work of a moment; but the result of a gradual process. We find the same principle in the moral world. Men do not form sinful habits in a moment. They are the work of time, the result of a continued course of action. Habits once formed, do not lose their influence in a moment. A man cannot lay off his habits like he can his garments. It takes time and labor to correct, subdue, and destroy them. Neither do men acquire virtuous habits in a moment. They can only be formed by much prayer and labor. There is "first the blade, then the ear, after THAT the full corn in the ear."

In the work of regeneration, there is a great difference in different persons. In some, the work is more rapid than in others. Some seem to emerge in a moment from the midnight darkness and gloom of sin, into the broad sunlight of divine truth, and the spiritual liberty of the Gospel ; but, experience and observation have taught us, that by far the most numerous, and evidently the most hopeful cases, are those that are gradual in their growth.

Frequently the process of regeneration has been going on for months, and even years, before it is visible to man. There may have been a long series of unseen struggles, suppressed groanings, secret penitential regrets, much prayer, heartfelt aspirations for holiness ; and the religious character, which seems to the eye of man to shoot up with apparent suddenness, but to the eye of Omniscience may be the work of months, or even years.

Our Savior has beautifully illustrated this subject in the following parable : "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Here the effect of divine truth on the heart, is compared to the operations of leaven. The process of leavening meal is gradual. The leaven gradually infuses its spirit and power through the meal, until the whole is leavened. Thus, in the process of regeneration, the spirit of divine truth gradually exerts its power upon the soul,—leading to reformation,—first in one point, then in another—and thus the work progresses, until the whole character is changed, and the man is made a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Regeneration must be gradual in its process, from the very nature of the work ; for, as a man progresses in this work, new truths unfold themselves to his mind, and, in

the end, he comes to regard that as sinful, which, in the beginning, he considered innocent.

IV. *Is regeneration an indelible work, or can the regenerate fall into sin, and finally perish?*

Regeneration is a hopeful state. It is a state of promise. The regenerate are surrounded by influences calculated to lead them on in the path of holiness and virtue. They are new creatures; have commenced a new life; new scenes open before them, new and brilliant prospects invite them onward; they are surrounded by new and holy society, are the subjects of new influences from above; have commenced a life of prayer, and tasted of the sweets of redeeming love; all of which give hope and promise of perseverance and ultimate triumph.

But, notwithstanding all these favorable influences and circumstances, there is a possibility, and even great danger, of a relapse into sin. The regenerated man may fall into sin, and lose his soul. Paul could have no doubt of his own regeneration; yet he speaks of the necessity of diligence, "lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." This proves that there is not only a possibility, but great danger of relapse into sin, and the final ruin of the soul. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

The New Testament abounds with the most thrilling exhortations to watchfulness and faithfulness, which imply that there is great danger. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." If there is no danger of relapsing into sin, and finally perishing, this language of the Apostle is unmeaning.

There is nothing in the nature of the religious character, to render it indestructible. It can only be maintained by prayerful and laborious effort; it may be lost by neglect. It is strengthened by exercising unto godliness, and it is weakened by neglect of religious duty. Hence, the exhortation: "Give all diligence, to add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." Even after regeneration, our final salvation in heaven, depends upon faithfulness in well doing.

V. *By what agency is the work of regeneration effected?* By human or divine? I answer by both. It is a work in which the agency of both God and man is employed. The true doctrine is implied in the language of Paul: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." We receive our natural life, and all its blessings, from the hands of God. In him we live, move, and have our being; but our own agency is necessary to preserve and perpetuate our life. Just so with the case now in hand. God is the author of spiritual life, and all its concomitant blessings; but our own agency is necessary to secure those blessings. God moveth the sinner "to will and do of his own good pleasure" by means; but these means are not irresistible. They may be resisted by the sinner, who must bow to the will of God, and faithfully use the means that he has ordained, for the accomplishment of this great work. "He must work out his own salvation with fear and trembling."

VI. *What are the evidences of regeneration?*

1. If we are born of the Spirit, we will be spiritually minded. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit; for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

2. We will delight in prayer. We will love to retire from the noise and confusion of the world, to hold communion with the Father of our spirits, amid the silence of the grove or closet. We will love to visit often the Throne of Grace, and lift up our hearts in solemn prayer to God.

3. Christian duty will be a delight and a pleasure to us. It will be our meat and drink to do our Master's will. The subject of christianity, and of christian duty, will always be welcome to us. We will love to visit the prayer meeting, to converse about our Savior, and to engage in all religious exercises.

4. The regenerate, love the Bible. They see a new beau-

ty in the sacred volume. It seems to speak to them in a different voice from what it did before. Its teachings and promises come home to their hearts. They delight in the law of the Lord; and in his law do they meditate day and night. Like Job they "esteem the words of his mouth more than their necessary food," They feel with David, that the word of the Lord is "more to be desired, than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb." They can exclaim with the Psalmist; "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

5. We will love the brethren. "This is my commandment," said Christ, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." "Beloved," said John, "let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." "We know," said John, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It is obvious, from the above language, that brotherly love is a distinguishing and conclusive evidence of regeneration; but where hatred and bitterness exist in the heart, it is an evidence that the heart is unregenerated. "He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness, even until now. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen."

6. We will love our enemies. We will manifest nothing but kindness, and love towards them. The divine

commandment is, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good unto them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them." Religion inspires the soul with a spirit of the most diffusive benevolence, and leads the regenerate to pray and labor for the good of all men, whether friends or foes. Hence, the exhortation of Paul; "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

7. We will obey Christ. "We know," said John, "that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." "If ye love me," said Christ, "keep my commandments; ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God."

8. "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The spirit has clearly revealed the evidences and fruits of regeneration, and if we possess these characteristics, we know that we have been regenerated, and are the children of God.

What are the evidences that we should seek in others as a condition of Christian fellowship? None but the all-seeing eye of God can infallibly determine who are the regenerate, and who are the unsanctified. Here the wheat and tares are blended together, and must remain so until

the judgment of the great day. Therefore, we should be very careful what we set up as a test of Christian fellowship.

We should not set up our creed as a test of Christian fellowship, and shut out from our communion, all who do not believe it. We are as liable to be mistaken as our brother. Making opinion the test of Christian fellowship, is what has divided the church, and paralyzed her energies. It has rent the seamless garment of Christ, and strengthened the hands of the enemy. It has done more injury to the cause of Christ, than all the infidels in the world.

If a man believes in, reverences, honors, and obeys Christ, and conforms his life to the spirit and precepts of christianity, he is a Christian—a child of God—an heir of heaven, and a joint-heir with Christ. It is only by man's actions, that we can tell what he is. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." If a man shows by his life that he is a Christian, we should receive and fellowship him as such.

In judging the state of our own hearts, we should rigidly apply the most stringent rules of the Gospel; but we should bring to the examination of our brother's character, that charity that "hopeth all things."

VII. *The necessity of regeneration.*

The necessity of regeneration grows out of the nature of things. The happiness of all beings depends upon the affinity that exists between their natures, and the things to be enjoyed. If there is no congeniality, there can be no happiness. Man cannot live and be happy in the fire. Why? Because there is no affinity between his physical nature and this element.

When we look abroad in the animal kingdom, we find

that every animal possesses a nature adapted to the element and mode of life for which it was designed by its Creator, and its happiness depends upon this affinity. The fish possesses a body and powers suited to the element of water, for which it was designed ; but take it out of the water and place it in the air, and its happiness and existence are destroyed. The bird possesses a nature adapted to the element in which it moves ; but its happiness and existence depend upon its remaining in this element. Transport it from this to the element of water, and its enjoyment and life are destroyed.

There are some quadrupeds and animalcules, that can only live and be happy in damp, dark, subterraneous abodes. Their nature is adapted to this state ; but place some others in this situation, and they would inevitably get blind and perish. It is obvious from these considerations, that the happiness of animals depends upon the affinity that exists between their natures, and the element in which they live.

When we ascend from the animal to the moral kingdom, we find the same principle. The happiness of man depends upon the affinity that exists between his moral nature, and the moral element in which he is placed. Where there is no affinity, there can be no happiness ; unless man possesses the moral and spiritual character of the society in which he is placed, he cannot, in the nature of things, be happy. The unregenerated man does not possess the spirit and character of the society of heaven. There is no affinity between the two. The one is holy, the other is unholy. One is animated by a spirit of love and obedience, the other of enmity and rebellion. It then necessarily follows that the sinner must be born again,

before he can enter into, and enjoy the society of heaven.

The fact that man is a sinner, evinces the necessity of regeneration. His heart is filled with enmity against God and man. There you will find hatred, bitterness, animosity, strife, pride, sordid selfishness. This shows the necessity of his regeneration; for, if he were admitted into heaven with his heart filled with these wicked passions, he would destroy the peace and happiness of heaven, and turn it into a hell.

The Scriptures positively declare, that a man must be regenerated before he can be admitted into heaven, and that all unregenerated characters shall be shut out of heaven—that all the wicked shall be turned into hell. John 3: 3; Mat. 18: 3; 1st Cor. 6: 9, 10; Rev. 21: 8; Mat. 13: 41, 42; 25: 46.

It is obvious from the above considerations, that the sinner must be regenerated, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, or he can never enjoy the blessed and holy society of heaven. He must be born again, or he is lost, forever lost. Oh what a solemn truth! It should arouse the sinner to earnest thought and action. It should awaken the careless to a sense of their danger. O sinner! remember that if you would enjoy the heart-cheering smiles of God, the society of the blessed Christ, the fellowship of the holy angels, the blessings and glories of heaven, you must be born again. This is the door to happiness and heaven.

“Sinners! this solemn truth regard!

Hear all ye sons of men;

For Christ, the Savior, hath declared,

‘Ye must be born again.’

Whate'er might be your birth or blood,
The sinner's boast is vain;
Thus saith the glorious Son of God,
"Ye must be born again."

DISCOURSE XI.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

JOHN v : 28, 29.

The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

“If a man die, shall he live again ?” This is the most thrilling and important question that ever interested the mind of man. Man comes forth upon the stage of action, endowed with noble and godlike powers of mind—mingles for a few years in the scenes and associations of earth, passes off from the active stage of life, and is known no more. His stay here is limited to the narrow circle of three score years and ten : “He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not.” Aye, like the chilling blasts of winter, that palsy and benumb his limbs, the dark and dismal night of death closes around him in the midst of his pursuits, and shrouds him in the darkness of the grave: The body soon decomposes, mingles with its original elements, and it is impossible for us to distinguish the matter that composed it. “Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the

ghost, and where is he?" Is this the last of him? Has the lamp of reason gone out in everlasting darkness? Is the lamp of life extinguished forever? Is there nothing in reserve for him? Is he to remain forever under the dark empire of the grave? Is the "valley and shadow of death" the ultimate boundary of human hopes and prospects—or, is there "a land inhabited?" These are questions that cannot be answered by the light of reason alone; but here Revelation comes to our aid, and throws a flood of light upon this important subject; it draws aside the veil that shrouded the future destiny of man in Tartarean darkness, and reveals the sublime and thrilling doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and a state of immortality beyond the gloomy shades of the tomb.

I. *What is it that is to be raised "from the dead?"*

Is it the body, or the soul, that is to be raised "from the dead?" In answer to this, I would ask, what is it that dies? Is it the souls of men? No, it is the body. It follows, then, as a necessary sequence, that it is the body that is to be raised from the dead. If it is not to be raised from the dead, there can be no resurrection; for there is nothing else to raise from the dead. Paul speaks of a "resurrection of the dead." It is something that is dead, that is to be raised to life. This must be the body; for the resurrection is not simply a separation of the soul from the body, but a raising of something "from the dead."

The text clearly teaches the literal resurrection of the body from the grave. Some make the grave mentioned in the text, the grave of sin and moral pollution, from which men are raised by the spirit and power of divine truth. This cannot be correct, from the consideration that those

“that have done evil, come forth unto the resurrection of damnation.” According to the teaching of Christ and the apostles, when a man is resurrected from the grave of sin, he is raised to life, and not to damnation. Paul, speaking of a spiritual resurrection, says: “God, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.” This proves that Christ is not speaking of a spiritual, but of a literal resurrection of the body from the dead.

Paul said to the Roman brethren: “If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit, that dwelleth in you.” What is it that is to be raised from the dead? Paul answers, “Your mortal bodies.” “Mortal bodies,” do not mean the souls of men; but it means just what it says. The Apostle said to the Philippians, “our conversation is in heaven; from whence, also, we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” Christ is not going to make us a new body out of new materials, but he is going to “change our vile body,” and fashion it like unto his glorious body.”

An inspired writer said, that “this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” What is it that is “corruptible?” Surely it is not the soul. It is the body alone that is corruptible, and this “must put on incorruption.” What is it that is “mortal?” It cannot be the soul, for this shall never die. It is the body that is “mortal,” and this must put on immortality.” It is obvious, from these considerations, that it is

the body that is to be raised "from the dead." The resurrection of Christ's body from the grave, confirms the doctrine of a literal resurrection from the dead. David speaks of Christ's resurrection in the following language: "My flesh, also, shall rest in hope: for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." On this passage, Peter makes the following beautiful comment: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up." How can the declaration, "My flesh shall rest in hope," be a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, if his flesh was not raised from the dead? Peter emphatically declares that his "flesh did not see corruption." This proves that his body was raised from the dead.

In speaking of his resurrection, Christ says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews supposed that he was speaking of their temple; "but he spake of the temple of his body." What else could the Jews destroy? They could destroy his body, but they could not destroy the soul. The very same body which the Jews could and would destroy, he would raise up in three days from the dead. This proves that it was his body that was raised from the grave to life again.

The resurrection of Christ is the pledge and pattern of

our resurrection. It is the foundation of our hopes of a resurrection from the dead. In the resurrection, the bodies of the righteous shall be changed and made like the glorified body of Christ. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

I will close my remarks upon this point, in the language of Paul, who, in speaking of the body, says: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." No language can be more explicit and unequivocal than this. It is too plain and pointed to need comment.

The resurrection of the body is the doctrine of revelation. Nature cannot teach us this sublime truth; yet this doctrine perfectly harmonizes with the teachings of nature. Though nature cannot teach us that the dead will rise from the darkness and gloom of the grave, invigorated with new life; yet it powerfully sanctions what is revealed in the Gospel, in reference to the dead. Behold the beautiful and glorious world around us! The fresh and blooming spring has opened before us; the vegetable process has commenced, and the vegetable kingdom puts forth new life. The warm and glowing summer follows, and the vegetable process comes to perfection. A few weeks pass, and the mild and lovely autumn approaches; the stalk withers and dies—vegetable death reigns triumphant—and, to a superficial observer, the vegetable productions of the earth seem to be destroyed; but winter passes away, and her dreary reign closes. Look yon-

der at the foot of that withered and dead stalk ! There comes up another, like its former self, in organism, beauty, and odor ; here we behold a vegetable resurrection. We bury the body in the grave, it is soon decomposed and resolved into its original elements ; to all human appearance it is lost beyond the hope of redemption ; but the long and dreary winter of death shall be succeeded by the glorious spring of immortality, and man shall come forth from the iron dominion of the grave, clothed in immortal youth and unfading beauty.

But, says the infidel, it is hard to conceive how the body, after its decomposition, is to be restored to its former identity. This is true ; but it is equally as hard to conceive how the vegetable, after its death and decomposition, is restored. It is impossible to understand how the vital principle of the vegetable, forces its way upward, through the inorganic world, and forms for itself a new vegetable organism. But who doubts the fact, because he cannot understand the philosophy of it ? There is no more mystery in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, than there is in the vegetable process by which a vegetable organism is produced.

Another objection to the resurrection of the body, is, that it becomes totally decomposed after death, mingles with other elements, forms numberless new combinations, and parts of it pass into impalpable gasses—these again uniting with other substances, and these substances again suffering decomposition, and thus the process goes on until the identity of the body is utterly lost. This is one of the most popular objections to the resurrection of the body ; but the developments of science have removed this objection. Science has clearly developed the fact,

that substances which are invisibly incorporated with air, water, and other fluids, and which seem to be entirely lost, may be made to appear in their original forms: for instance, put a solid piece of camphor into a phial half filled with the spirits of wine, and in a short time it will be dissolved in the fluid, and the liquid will be as transparent as at first; then add water to the fluid, and it will unite with the spirits, and the camphor will be eliminated, and fall to the bottom of the phial. By this means the camphor may be nearly all recovered, and, by distillation, the spirits may be separated from the water. Thus it may be with the body: though it may be decomposed, mingled with the elements, and apparently lost forever; yet God can as easily separate it from the elements and restore its identity, as the chemist can, by an application of the laws of chemistry, eliminate the dissolved camphor.

Take another illustration: The chemist will take a piece of gold into his laboratory, file it to powder, dissolve it with acids, alloy it with other metals, grind it to powder, throw it into the fire, and bring it out the same gold, freed from all other substances; he can mould it again in the same dye, and be perfectly sure that it is the same gold. Is the God of infinite wisdom, and omnipotent power, whose vast laboratory is the mighty universe, less skillful than man? Cannot he, whose Almighty fiat called the universe into being, and stretched out the heavens as a curtain, collect together the fragments of the human body, although mingled with the elements, and scattered to the four winds of heaven? It requires no greater display of divine power and infinite wisdom to accomplish this work, than it did to form man out of the dust of the earth.

Again, it is objected that the resurrection of the body implies the resurrection of every identical particle of matter of which it is composed. This, it is contended, is impossible in the nature of things, as one body at death becomes parts of other bodies at their death ; and consequently two or more souls would claim the same body in the resurrection. In answer to this, I remark, that the Scriptures do not teach that just the same amount of gross matter, neither more or less, which was deposited in the grave, is essential to the resurrection. All that the Scriptures teach, is, that which constitutes the essential identity of the body, shall be raised again ; not, indeed, the gross matter that was laid in the tomb, but refined, purified, and spiritualized. Paul has beautifully illustrated this point : "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain : but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The stalk of grain, that springs from the seed that was deposited in the earth, is not composed, numerically, of the same matter that composed the seed that was sown ; yet it comes from it. Its identity is preserved. So, also, is the resurrection of the dead. The body that is raised from the dead, may not embrace every particle of matter that composed the body that was laid in the tomb ; yet it is formed out of it. This does not destroy the essential identity of the body. Our bodies, during our life, undergo a great change, so far as the amount of gross matter contained in them is concerned. Look yonder, at that man, who weighs one hundred and seventy-five pounds ! He is struck down by a malignant disease, and in a few days is reduced to one hundred and forty pounds. Here is a great

change, so far as the amount of gross matter contained in his system is concerned ; yet his identity is not destroyed. No one imagines that he has a different body. Our bodies are not composed of the same particles of matter for the short space of fifty hours ; yet we are conscious that we have the same body. This proves that the same particles of matter are not essential to the identity of the body.

It is obvious, from the above considerations, that the body of man shall be raised from the grave to a new and immortal life. The long and gloomy night of death shall be succeeded by the glorious morning of immortality and eternal life. The darkness of the grave shall be swallowed up in the light and the glory of immortality. Thank God !

“Spring shall visit the mouldering urn,
And day shall dawn on the night of the tomb.”

II. There is to be a resurrection of all men from the dead : “For, as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” All who die in Adam, shall be made alive in Christ. All that man lost in Adam, he shall regain in Christ. He was brought under the dominion of death by sin, and he shall be delivered from that bondage by Christ, who is “the resurrection and the life.”—Acts 24 : 15 ; Dan. 12 : 2 ; John 5 : 28, 29.

The resurrection of our body is not dependant upon what we can do. We must be raised from the grave, whether we will, or will not. We have nothing to say in this work. The resurrection is absolute and unconditional. The decree has gone forth, and it must be obeyed. The Almighty fiat will call forth the slumbering millions from the tomb. In the resurrection of all men from the grave, we see the goodness and justice of God

clearly developed. He does not leave man to suffer eternally the consequences of that over which he has no control. He leaves the incorrigible sinner to suffer eternally the consequences of his own sins; but he will deliver us from the dominion of death, under which we were brought, without our consent.

It is necessary that all men be raised from the dead, in order to prepare them for the judgment. God has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by Christ; consequently, all must be raised from the dead, else how can they be judged. The Apostle John, in looking through the dark vista of future ages, saw the final consummation of this great purpose of God.—Rev. 20: 11, 12.

III. The resurrection of the dead, and the second coming of Christ, are events precisely coetaneous. The era of one is the era of the other. "Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." Here we have the resurrection of the dead, and the second coming of Christ, connected together.

One great object of the second coming of Christ, is the resurrection of the dead. Christ once came to redeem the soul of man from sin; but he is coming again to redeem the body from the dominion of death. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth:" "for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Christ has met, and grappled with the dreaded

monster, in the dark shades of the tomb. He triumphed over the enemy in his strongest hold. "I am he that liveth," saith Christ, "and was dead; and behold, I am alive forever more, and have the keys of hell and of death." In the last day, he will unlock the vaulted tombs, and call forth the slumbering millions of the dead: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Oh, what a tremendous and glorious scene here opens to our view! It is the last tragic scene in the grand drama of human events. The revolutions of empires, the fall of kingdoms, the annihilation of republics, and the destruction of nations, dwindle into comparative insignificance, when compared to the decisions of that awful day. Had I the eloquence of an angel, and a voice like seven thunders, I could not describe the awful and tremendous scene that revelation here opens to our view.

"Amazing period! when each mountain height outburns Vesuvius,
Rocks eternal pour their melted masses, as rivers once they poured,
Stars rush, final ruin fiercely drives her ploughshare o'er creation."

"And I saw," said John, "a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead

which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire."

DISCOURSE XII.

THE RESURRECTION.

JOHN V : 28, 29.

The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

The Scriptures inform us that the reign of death shall come to an end, and that man “shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption,” and live to die no more. The question then arises in the reflecting mind, are all men to be raised to the enjoyment of the blessings of heaven? Shall there be no distinction in the resurrection between the righteous and the wicked? And what is the nature of the body that man shall possess after the resurrection? These are questions of deep and thrilling interest to all men, and we must go to revelation for an answer. It is here *alone* that we can learn the truth, and receive an infallible answer. Revelation has answered those questions, and our present business is to learn the answer.

1. There is to be a distinction in the resurrection of the dead. The righteous shall be raised to “eternal life,” and the wicked to “eternal damnation.” The good man

shall be raised to a state of superlative happiness at the right hand of God ; but the wicked man shall be raised to a state of inexpressible misery. The language of the text is pointed and unequivocal. "All that are in the graves shall come forth ; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This language clearly establishes three important points : 1st. That all men—"all that are in the graves," shall be raised from the dead. 2d. That the good man shall be raised to the enjoyment "of life." 3d. That the wicked man shall be raised to misery,—to "damnation."

In the prophecy of Daniel, we have the following affirmation : "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." This language is too plain to need comment. It declares, in the most emphatic manner, that there shall be a vast distinction in the resurrection, between the righteous and the wicked.

On one occasion, some caviling Jews came to Christ with a question touching the resurrection. They presented the case of a woman who had seven husbands, and desired to know whose wife she would be in the resurrection. "Jesus answering, said unto them : the children of this world marry, and are given in marriage ; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage." The affirmation, "they which shall be accounted *worthy* to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage ; neither can they die any more ; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the chil-

dren of the resurrection ;" implies that there will be some who shall not "be accounted worthy" to obtain this glorious state. This proves that there will be a difference between the righteous, and the unrighteous character in the resurrection. The good man "shall be accounted worthy to obtain" a state of blessedness, of which the wicked man shall be accounted unworthy.

Paul said, "I count all things but lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that I may win Christ ; and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith ; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death ; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Paul endured all this suffering and sorrow, that he "might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." This proves that a resurrection to life and happiness, is dependent upon the character that man forms here ; for if all men are to be made holy and happy in the resurrection, why did Paul suffer so much to "attain" that which was absolutely certain ? If Paul knew that in the resurrection, all men are to be raised to happiness, he might have avoided all his suffering and toil. The plain fact that Paul suffered so much to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead ;" proves that a resurrection to happiness and heaven is conditional.

In speaking of the triumphs of faith, Paul said, "Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance ; that they might

obtain a better resurrection." Here the Apostle speaks of "a better resurrection." The children mentioned in the first part of the passage, were raised to die again, and were subject to all the ills of life ; but in the "last day," the Christian shall be raised to immortal life, and all the blessings of heaven. This is "the better resurrection," which is only obtained by perseverance in well doing ; for the characters spoken of by Paul, suffered the most cruel torture, "not accepting deliverance," on the condition of apostacy ;" "that they might obtain a better resurrection." If all men are to be raised to holiness and happiness, why was it necessary for them to suffer so much to "obtain" it ? This shows that this "better resurrection" can be "obtained only by a virtuous and holy life.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order." Dr. McKnight renders it thus : "Every one in his proper band." According to this, every one is to be raised in his proper band. The righteous in their band at the right hand of the Judge, and the wicked in theirs at his left hand.

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just, and unjust." From this language we learn, that there will be two characters in the resurrection,—“the just, and the unjust.” How can this be, unless there is a distinction in the resurrection, between the “just, and the unjust.”

It is impossible in the nature of things, for the resurrection of the body to change the moral character of the soul. Sin and holiness belong to the soul, and not to the body ; and neither the death, nor the resurrection of the

body can change its moral complexion. This can only be done by moral means. The resurrection of the body is effected by physical power, and this can never make the soul holy. The resurrection of the body shall be effected "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye;" but the moral character of the soul, cannot be changed "in a moment." It takes time to accomplish this great work. We do not form evil habits "in a moment," neither can we change them "in a moment." The complexion of the soul cannot be changed by a foreign power alone. It is a work to which man must contribute. The idea that the soul is made holy in the resurrection, is unphilosophical, opposed to the nature of the soul, and to moral goodness.

II. The bodies of the righteous shall be raised incorruptible, spiritual, and immortal.

The Gospel reveals a moral, spiritual, and physical regeneration, or salvation. The first is a salvation from sin, a resurrection from spiritual death. The second is a change of the body from a natural to a spiritual one. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The natural body of the righteous, is that with which they are now clothed. This natural, or animal body of the righteous man, is wisely adapted to the world in which he now lives. The spiritual body is that which the righteous man shall receive in the resurrection of the dead. This body shall be wisely adapted to the world that he shall then enter, and the sphere in which he shall then move. He shall then enter a higher, nobler, sublimer state. He shall fill a higher station in the scale of being than he now fills. He shall mingle with a higher and nobler order of intelligences, than those with whom he is now as-

sociated. He will be surrounded by more grand and sublime objects, than those by which he is now surrounded. He will be engaged in higher and nobler employments than the affairs of this world. The natural body is not adapted to that sublime and glorious state of being, and the elevated pursuits in which the immortal mind shall then engage. The natural body is beautifully adapted to this world, and the pursuits in which man now engages ; but it is not adapted to the spiritual world, and the elevated sphere in which man shall then move. Hence, the Lord will provide a spiritual body for the righteous man, to prepare him for that immortal state, that he shall soon enter. This was the hope and expectation of Paul. "For we know," said he, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

1. The natural body is corruptible, but the spiritual body is incorruptible. "It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption." The natural body is subject to change, decay, and death. By the slightest causes the natural body is affected, and its beautiful mechanism thrown out of order. To-day we behold man in the strength and vivacity of early manhood ; his eye sparkles with the fire and energy of the immortal soul that is confined within ; his cheek is tinged with the rose of health ; his step is firm and elastic. But to-morrow, O how changed ! The adverse winds of the turbulent ocean of time, have blown upon him ; the rose has faded from his cheek ; his step has lost its elasticity ; and the fire that sparkled in his eye, has grown dim ; the natural body is shrouded in the dark mantle of death, and laid away in the silent chambers of the tomb, subject to decomposition and decay. It is soon

decomposed and resolved into its original elements. But the spiritual body is incorruptible. It is not subject to death and decomposition. It shall never be brought under "the bondage of corruption;" but it shall bloom in immortal youth, and unfading beauty.

"Hope looks beyond the bounds of time,
When what we now deplore,
Shall rise in full, immortal prime,
And bloom to fade no more."

2. The natural body is dishonored by disease and death. "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory." Death is the punishment of sin, and it disgraces and dishonors "the natural body." Death renders "the natural body" loathsome and shocking to those who loved it best; but the spiritual body is clothed in glory. It is clothed in robes of light, fit for those whom the King of Heaven delights to honor. Daniel, in speaking of the risen bodies of the righteous, says, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that have turned many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." And Christ says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Our Savior gave his disciples an idea of this glory at his transfiguration, when he changed his body in such a manner that "his face did shine as the sun," and his raiment became "shining, exceeding white, as the light." The spiritual body of the righteous is clothed in glory, like the glorious body of Christ. Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, (Adam,) we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," (Adam.) "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not

yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is."

"Array'd in glorious grace,
Shall these vile bodies shine,
And every shape, and every face,
Look heavenly and divine."

3. The natural body is weak and feeble. Man, at his best, is but a very feeble animal, so far as physical power is concerned ; and even this power is often wasted by disease, and is entirely destroyed by death. The natural body is not able to sustain the mind in its labors for the acquisition of knowledge ; but it sinks under the fatigue of a few hours hard study. The body is often worn out, and dies under the labors of the mind. How often have we seen the industrious student sink into an early grave, worn out by his intellectual labors ; but the spiritual body shall be adapted to the sublime and godlike powers of the mind. It shall be endowed with a power and activity, that it is impossible for us to conceive. It shall be able to endure without fatigue the greatest efforts that the immortal mind is capable of putting forth. Clothed with this spiritual body, the mind will be fully prepared to range the delectable fields of knowledge ; drink *deep* at the pure fountain of wisdom that flows "out of the throne of God and the Lamb ;" and perpetually advance in the investigation of the sublime wonders of the ever-unfolding and ever-mysterious universe of God. Here the mind is tied down to the earth by this clog of clay ; but when it shall cast off this natural body, and put on the spiritual body, it shall ascend to the glorious rest that remains for the people of God, where it shall ever advance to-

wards moral and intellectual perfection. Perhaps man shall then be permitted to visit the different worlds that are scattered throughout the unmeasured regions of infinite space, and investigate the sublime mysteries of "the great and marvellous works" of God.

"Though greedy worms devour my skin,
And gnaw my wasting flesh ;
When God shall build my bones again,
He'll clothe them all afresh.

Then shall I see thy lovely face,
With strong immortal eyes ;
And feast upon thy unknown grace,
With pleasure and surprise."

4. The natural body is an animal body, and is kept alive by food, sleep, and air, as the bodies of animals are. Food is necessary to the existence of the natural body. The resurrection body is a spiritual body of a more refined contexture, needing none of those animal refreshments; and is endowed with qualities of a spiritual nature, like the angels of God. "They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage : neither can they die any more ; for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." To sustain the spiritual body, all that is necessary is the presence of the spirit. It needs no foreign aid. The mind, or spiritual part of man, does not need food like the body to keep it alive. It can and does live independent of all such-aids. The spiritual body partakes of spiritual qualities and powers. It is as purely spiritual as the soul. Now, if it be true, that the spiritual body is of as purely a spiritual nature as the soul, and the soul

does not need animal food to sustain it in being, it follows as a necessary sequence, that the spiritual body does not need such food to keep it alive. The spiritual body is perfect in all its parts; no longer dependent upon natural productions for its support; being built upon indestructible principles, and existing in a region where there shall be no more death; no more causes of decay leading to dissolution; and consequently no more necessity for food, nutrition, &c. The body is spiritual, has a spiritual existence, and a spiritual support. Such are the bodies of the righteous.

III. There is something thrilling and animating in the doctrine of the resurrection. It is a fountain of joy and comfort to the Christian. There is something dark and gloomy in the grave, and man shrinks back from death, fond of his prison and his clay; but the darkness and gloom of the tomb fades away before the glorious light of immortality. To the Christian it is a vestibule to a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The hour of death is a solemn hour. Then all those tender ties which bind us to the earth, must be torn asunder. We must bid a long farewell to all our earthly friends, however dear. For the last time the husband must take the parting hand of that loved one, that has shared with him the sorrows and joys of life; for the last time, he must imprint the parting kiss upon the cheek of his loved little ones; for the last time he must bid farewell to those beloved brothers and sisters, with whom he has spent so many pleasant hours. The world recedes from his view, and the grave opens before him; but to the Christian, there ariseth a light amid the darkness and gloom of the tomb. By faith he looks forward through the dark vista

of the future, to the coming of the Lord, and the resurrection of the dead ; and, in the sweet composure of triumphant hope, he can adopt the sublime and elevated strains of the poet :

“I know that he whose years can ne’er decay,
Will from the grave redeem my sleeping clay ;
When the last rolling sun shall leave the skies,
I shall survive, and o’er the dust arise.
Then shall this mangled skin new form assume,
This flesh then flourish in immortal bloom ;
My raptured eyes the judging God shall see,
Estrang’d no more, but friendly then to me !
How does this lofty hope my soul inspire !
I burn, I faint, with vehement desire !”

When called to follow a beloved friend to the silent tomb, with what joy does the mind dwell upon the doctrine of the resurrection ! The thought of a resurrection comes as an angel of mercy to wipe away our tears, and soothe the wounded spirit. It dispels the darkness of the grave, and reveals to our enraptured mind a realm where the rainbow never fades—where the flowers bloom forever—where the sweet songs of the immortal songsters shall never cease—where man shall bloom in immortal youth and unfading beauty.

I saw a heart-stricken and lonely widow standing at the grave of a loved one. Beneath the green hillock lies buried the companion of her youth. Joys and pleasures, long since fled, come crowding thick and fast upon her memory. She thought of the many happy hours they had spent, and the pleasant scenes through which they had passed, in the enjoyment of each other’s society. An indescribable loneliness gathered around her soul, and she wept tears of bitter sorrow. She thought, “is this the

last of him who was as near and dear to me as my own soul? Shall I never enjoy his society again? Shall the darkness of death shroud him from my view forever? O death! inexorable death!" A kind angel of mercy from heaven, whispered in her ear, "weep not, as those who have no hope. Thy husband shall live again. Day shall dawn on the night of the grave, and spring shall visit the mouldering urn. Thou shalt be reassociated with that loved one in a brighter and better world than this,—where death is an eternal stranger." By faith she saw the descending Lord—the rising dead—and heard the shout of victory, as it burst from the heaven-inspired lips of the mighty multitude: "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory?" The cloud passed from her mind—the light of heaven shone into her soul—she wiped away her tears, and returned to the duties of life, rejoicing with a joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory.

DISCOURSE XIII.

IMMORTALITY.

II TIMOTHY 1: 10.

Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

Immortality is the glorious discovery of Christianity. It is true, that prior to the advent of Christ, all the nations of the earth had a faint idea of a spirit land; but their notions were crude and imperfect. Before Christ, immortality was but a conjecture—a faint hope. The most profound philosophers of antiquity could not remove the gloomy doubts that hung around this thrilling truth, and arrive at absolute certainty. Christ hath visited our earth, and by his teaching, death, resurrection, and ascension, has scattered the gloomy clouds that shrouded the future state in Tartarean darkness. "He hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The doctrine of immortality is now established upon a firm foundation. Christ hath made it a certainty; it is no longer a conjecture.

Scripture and reason clearly teach us, that man has a soul. The question then to be settled is, is the soul immaterial, and can it exist separate from the body? This

is a question of the most thrilling interest, and in answering it, I take the position that the soul is immortal, immaterial, and will live time without end.

1st. Matter—I care not how much it may be modified, or into what shape it may be thrown—can neither *think*, *love*, nor *hate*; but the mind of man never ceases to think, love, and hate. This proves that the mind, or soul of man, is something distinct from the body. Matter and mind are substances which are, in their nature, radically and essentially different: matter is divisible, mind is indivisible. It is self-evident that matter does not possess the power of thought. This is a power that does not belong to matter. If matter is cogitative, then every particle of matter in the universe is a distinct mind. According to this philosophy, man, instead of possessing one mind, which governs the body, possesses an infinite number of minds. If matter is cogitative, then every particle of matter in the body of man is a distinct mind. Why does the sense of thinking lay in the head, and all the ministers of sensation make their report to something there, if all matter is apprehensive and cogitative? For in this case there would be as much thought and understanding in the fingers, toes, and every where else, as in the head. If we admit that matter is cogitative, it must continue to think until it is annihilated; thus, even materialism leads us to the doctrine of immortality.

2d. Matter does not possess the power of locomotion; *vis inertia* is a property of all material substances. Take the rock, for an example: it does not possess the power of putting itself in motion; it is motionless; and, unless moved by some foreign power, it will remain in the same position through all coming time. The body of man is

natural, and in order to move, it must be acted on by some body or power, possessing properties or power essentially different from those possessed by matter. The change from rest to motion is effected by willing: my arm moves in obedience to my will. The thing in us that wills, is not matter: for this is a power that does not belong to matter; and, since willing is a property which cannot subsist by itself without a subject of which it is the power, I conclude that the thing in us which wills, is an immortal being, and this is what Christ calls the soul. Now, if the soul is an immaterial being, distinct from the body, it follows as a necessary sequence, that it is not dependent upon the state of the body for its continuance in being.

3d. All material substances are governed by the law of limitation. Vegetables, and the bodies of men and animals, soon come to perfection: they are limited in their growth. Not so with the mind: it is not governed by the laws of limitation—it is endowed with the power of unlimited expansion. My arm has grown so long, and the necessary laws of limitation forbid its longer growth; but who can say thus of the mind? The fact that the mind of man is capable of endless improvement, is strong presumptive evidence of its immortality. The noble and godlike powers of man, prove that he is destined for a higher and nobler state of being than this. His sublime powers of mind, when sanctified by the religion of Christ, qualify him for the fellowship of angels, and the society of the noblest intelligences of the universe. “It is reasonable to suppose, that a being of such vast powers of mind, which are capable of indefinite improvement, is

limited in its existence to the narrow circle of three score years and ten? Shall

“A soul possessed
Of such extensive, deep, tremendous powers,
Enlarging still,”

be annihilated, and sweep, with a mighty besom of destruction, into the dark abyss of non-existence? This is unphilosophical and absurd.

4th. The strong desire of future existence implanted in the mind, is a strong proof of a future state. There is no human being that is satisfied with his present attainments. It matters not how great a man's intellectual attainments may be, or what his situation in life, he is never satisfied with them. There is a vacuum in the mind that these things can never fill. The mind is ever on the stretch after something higher. The man of pleasure is never satisfied with his present enjoyments. He is constantly on the stretch after something higher, that will increase his pleasure. The miser is never satisfied with his present possessions; it matters not how great his possessions, he is constantly straining every nerve to accumulate more. The scholar is never satisfied with his present attainments. The most profound philosopher that ever adorned our earth, was not satisfied with his present knowledge. Were a Newton, a Franklin, a Locke, a Boerhave, a Clarke, a Channing, satisfied with their present attainments? No! Their lives were one continued improvement, “regardless of the past, unsatisfied with the present, man feasts himself on hope of enjoyments never yet possessed.”

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast,
Man never is, but always to be blest,

The soul, uneasy, and confined at home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come."

This burning desire is common to all men, in every situation in life. This is strong presumptive evidence of man's immortality. If God did not design that man should live forever, why did he plant this desire in his mind? Surely God never designs to tantalize his creatures. The poet asks,

"Whence comes this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?"

It was planted in the mind of man by the hand of God.

5th. "That the thinking principle in man is immortal, and will never die, was believed by the ancient Egyptians, the Persians, the Phœnicians, the Scythians, the Celtes, the Druids, the Assyrians, and by all the wisest and most celebrated among the Greeks and Romans." Homer, Virgil, and Ovid, sung of Elysian fields and Hesperian gardens, where the souls of their heroes enjoyed the smiles of their Gods, and ranged the delectable fields of blessedness. This is presumptive of a future state of being.

6th. The inspired writers represent the body of man as the tabernacle, or house, in which the soul resides: "Behold, he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly. How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay."—Job 4: 18, 13. Here the body is represented as a house of clay, in which the soul dwells. Paul uses a similar expression in 2d Cor. 5: 1—"For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." According to this language, there is a clear distinction between the

body and the soul of man. The body is the tabernacle, and the soul is the inhabitant of that tabernacle. Who ever imagined that the house in which man dwells, is the man himself; that the house and the man are identical; that one cannot exist without the other? The language of Peter upon this point is clear and unequivocal. "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." Here the Apostle not only represents the body as the house or tabernacle in which the soul dwells, but speaks of a time which was near, when he should "*put off this tabernacle.*" This proves that the soul is not dependent upon the body for its continuance in being.

7th. Our Savior said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." This language clearly teaches the immateriality and immortality of the soul. If the soul of man was material, and died with the body, then when man killed the body he would kill the soul also; but Christ says that man is "*not able to kill the soul.*"

8th. The history of the rich man and the beggar is to the point: "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man died also, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." The rich man died, his body was buried, and his soul went to hell. I care not whether this be regarded as a parable or as a history, it teaches the same sentiment.

9th. Christ said to the penitent malefactor, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." If the mind is the result of physical organization, and expires with the death of the body, in what sense are we to understand this language of Christ? To-day does not mean to-morrow, nor a thousand years hence; it means simply what it says—to-day. The soul, the immortal part of the penitent thief, was with Christ in the paradise of God, whilst his body was in the grave.

10th. "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; for he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for *all* live unto him."—Luke 20 : 37, 38. Abraham had been dead upwards of three hundred years before these words were spoken to Moses; yet, he still calls himself the God of Abraham, &c. Then, if he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, it follows, with all the force of demonstration, that, if he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they are not dead, but alive. Though their bodies have been dead for centuries, and have long since mouldered back to their mother earth, their souls still live, and shall live as long as immortality shall last.

Thus we see that both reason and revelation harmonize upon this point. Though the light of nature alone cannot dispel all the dark clouds that hang around this thrilling truth, yet in her counsels we hear words of comfort and hope. But God has not left us to the light of reason alone. He has drawn aside the dark veil that shrouded the future destiny of man in Tartarean darkness, and revealed the thrilling truth, that the lamp of intelligence, lighted up at the eternal fountain of wisdom,

shall never be extinguished, but shall burn with increasing splendor, time without end—that the soul of man shall ascend to a sublimer state of being, and go on from strength, adding virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge—that the mind shall perpetually advance towards moral and intellectual perfection. Well has the poet sung :

“The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and all nature sink in years ;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt, amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

This earthly tabernacle may dissolve and crumble to pieces, but the thinking part of man shall survive the dissolution of the body, and live parallel with God.

“Cold in the dust this perished heart may lie,
But that which quickened once can never die,
Unburied with its mortal frame,
With living light, eternal and the same,
Shall beam on joyous interminable years,
Unrivalled by darkness, unassuaged by tears,
Shall lure its eyes to deathless scenes sublime,
Beyond the realms of nature and of time.”

It is pleasing to the imagination, and we love to follow our virtuous friends into the spirit land. True, we cannot turn our eyes to the particular point in the illimitable regions of infinite space, to which our friends go when they die ; yet we know to what beings they go. Though we know not where heaven is located, yet we know what is of more interest and importance to us—what beings it contains. There is the Lord Jesus Christ, the holy angels, and the blessed Father of all. When the virtuous soul leaves this world, it goes to Christ.

Christ said to the thief on the Cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Paul informs us that, when we are absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. This fact alone, assures us of their unutterable happiness. The good man cultivates an acquaintance with Christ here, through the sacred records; he follows him, with veneration, through his eventful life, studies and treasures up in his mind his words, works, and precious promises—and, by receiving his spirit, knows something of the inexpressible happiness of those fairer worlds on high,

"Where seraphs gather immortality,
On life's fair tree, hard by the throne of God."

It, no doubt, adds to the happiness of Christ to meet his followers safe on the fair shores of immortality. We may know something of the feelings of Christ on such an occasion as this, by what our own feelings have been when we received to our embrace a kind and affectionate friend, who has been delivered from great danger. Look yonder, at that affectionate and devoted wife! her beloved husband is tempest-tossed, in a fragile barque, upon the lashing waves of the mighty deep; he is in imminent danger. She watches and waits, with thrilling interest, the close of the tempestuous scene: the storm is hushed, the waves sink into rest, and he is delivered, and comes safe to land; Oh! with what inexpressible pleasure, with what exstatic joy she folds him to her bosom! Such, only infinitely greater, is the pleasure of Christ, in receiving one of his children to his embrace, in the spirit land.

It increases the happiness of the child of God, to be admitted into the society of Christ. Suppose that we had a beloved friend, bound to us by the most sacred, holy,

and indissoluble ties of nature and love, but are shut out from his society for a time, by causes over which we have no control. For instance, business calls him from our embrace to a foreign clime. With what pleasure and joy we would anticipate a reunion, and how greatly this pleasure and happiness would be increased by a reunion. Just so with the Christian; he is united to Christ by a strong and undying love, and is, for a time, shut out from personal intercourse with him. But with what pleasure and joy does he look forward to the happy period, when he shall be admitted into personal communion with him. The happiness of the Christian in view is great; but how greatly will it be increased when he is admitted into the presence of Christ.

The virtuous man, when he leaves this world, not only goes to Christ, but he goes to the blessed society that he has gathered around him; to the redeemed from all regions of the earth; "to the city of the living God; to an innumerable company of angels; to the church of the first born; to the spirits of the just made perfect." They go to that "great multitude," that John saw, "which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, which stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with robes, and palms in their hands." Into what a blessed society do they enter!—the society of the highest intelligences of the universe of God, and enjoy close and intimate communion with all the truly wise and good that ever adorned our earth. There we shall be brought into close communion with Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and all the holy prophets and apostles. O! what a glorious thought, that we shall be admitted into such glorious society!

The society into which the righteous soul shall be admitted, is free from all selfishness. Here there is nothing that clings to man with such tenacity as selfishness—and there is nothing so destructive to the peace and happiness of society. How often does the foul spirit of sordid selfishness invade the social circle, and scatter the fire-brands of discord, strife, envy, and bitterness, broad-cast upon society. This spirit is unknown in heaven; the society of heaven is animated by a spirit of love; all minds in the abodes of blessedness are inspired with the spirit of Christ. Thank God!

“There is a calm for those that weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found :
And while the mouldering ashes sleep
Low in the ground.

The soul, of origin divine,
God’s glorious image freed from clay,
In heaven’s eternal sphere shall shine
A star of day.

The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky,
The soul, immortal as its sire,
Shall never die.”

Heaven is a glorious reality; its attractions should be felt perpetually; it should overcome the mighty force with which the world draws us to itself. We should always keep our eyes fixed on heaven, and always act in reference to it. How little influence does heaven exert on the great mass of mind! It is true, that the attractions of heaven have led some to renounce the service of sin, break off from their sinful associations, and cultivate those sublime virtues that will prepare them for the bless-

ed society of heaven ; but the great mass of men act as though there was no heaven, no hell, and this world was their eternal home. O what folly !—what madness !—what unaccountable infatuation !

Suppose that there were, somewhere in Europe, “a country, uniting all that is beautiful in nature, and all that is great in virtue, genius, and the liberal arts, and numbering among its inhabitants the most illustrious philosophers, scholars, poets, statesmen, and philanthropists of our age”—and that they were free from sickness, pain, sorrow, and death—how eagerly would we cross the ocean, to visit it. The attractions of heaven are immeasurably greater. “Heaven unites all these things, and much more. There live the elder brethren of creation, the sons of the morning, who sang for joy at the creation of our race ; there are the great and the good of all ages and all climes ; there are all the prophets, apostles, and holy martyrs ; there is our heavenly Father, and our blessed Savior. They say unto us, come and share our everlasting blessedness ; come and unite in our songs of praise ; come and share our adoration and glory ;” come and walk with us the golden streets of the new Jerusalem ; come and drink of the waters of life ; come and mingle with us around the azure throne of the mighty God ; come and gather immortality on life’s fair tree, hard by the throne of God ; come and unite with us in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Shall this voice speak to us in vain ? Will we turn a deaf ear to the melting calls of heaven ? Shall we let our selfishness and worldliness separate us from the abode of blessedness, and the society of heaven ? Oh ! remember, my dying friends, that,

without holiness of heart and life, no man shall ever be admitted into the society of heaven !

“Pure are the joys above the sky,

And all the region peace ;

No wanton lips, nor envious eye,

Can see or taste the bliss.

Those holy gates forever bar

Pollution, sin, and shame ;

None shall obtain admittance there,

But followers of the Lamb.”

DISCOURSE XIV.

THIS LIFE A STATE OF PROBATION.

GALATIANS 6: 7.

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Reason and Revelation teach us that this life is only an embryotic state of existence—that death will usher us into a new life—that the soul shall live parallel with God. This great truth leads to a thrilling question: will our conduct in time have any bearing upon our eternal state? Will the character that we form in time, determine our future destiny? Is there any moral connection between this, and the future life? These are momentous questions, which should awaken serious thought in every mind. They should lead us to earnest enquiry into the great purpose for which life, and all its blessings were bestowed upon us. Were we placed here to prepare for a higher and nobler state of being? Is this life a state in which the mind is to be disciplined and qualified for a better world beyond the grave? Paul answers, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Here the Apostle states a great truth—that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." This is true in the physical, intellectual, and moral world. When

we look abroad in the vegetable kingdom, we find that the seed sown produces its own with an unerring certainty. The wheat produces wheat, and the corn produces corn. This is the fixed and immutable law of the vegetable kingdom. Like always produces like. What is true in the vegetable kingdom, is true in the moral. If a man sows goodness, he reaps goodness; if he sows evil, he gathers evil. "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." "They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same." He that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity. "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."

The laws that govern the physical universe, are fixed and immutable, and can not be violated with impunity. We cannot violate any of them without sooner or later suffering the consequence. It is a law of the physical universe, that fire shall burn combustible substances when brought in contact with them. This law cannot be violated with impunity. No man can thrust his hand into the fire without being burned.

We find the same principle in the moral world. God has annexed certain penalties to all the laws of his moral kingdom; and these laws cannot be violated without suffering the penalty. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Intemperance is a violation of the laws of our physical and moral nature. The inebriate reaps the fearful consequences in wasted health, a diseased body, a guilty conscience, the undying goadings of depraved desire, a ruined character, a disgraceful and unlamented death.

The punishment of sin is the natural effect of sin. It

as naturally follows the act of sin, as pain does the thrusting of the hand in the fire, or the report does the discharging of the gun. The suffering that follows the intemperate use of intoxicating drinks, is the natural and necessary result of intemperance. It is the necessary effect of an adequate cause. If we sow wheat, the necessary result is a crop of wheat. A diseased body, a guilty conscience, a sense of shame, the goadings of depraved desire, and a miserable death, as naturally, and necessarily follow intemperance, as wheat springs from wheat sown in the earth.

The experience of all men, in all ages, and in all climes, proves that misery and unhappiness, are the natural and necessary result of sin, mental perturbation, the sting of a guilty conscience, the undying goadings of deprived desire, the loss of the love and companionship of the good, disease, and death are the consequences of sin. "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "For the wages of sin is death."

Here a solemn question arises in the mind: does the effects of sin on the soul, end with the mortal life, or do the consequences sin follow man into the eternal world? Are sin and its effects buried with the body in the grave, or are they felt beyond the shades of death? Do we reap all the consequences of sin in time, or shall we gather some of its fruits in eternity? Reason and revelation teach us, that the effects of sin reach beyond the circle of time—that its consequences will be felt in eternity—that eternity is the place where we shall reap the full reward of our actions—that life is the seed time, eternity

the harvest—that we now sow the seed, but shall gather the fruit in eternity—that our conduct in time determines our eternal destiny. This is the doctrine of reason and revelation. They clearly establish this solemn and tremendous truth.

It is thought by some that there is no moral connection between time and eternity—that the present life will have no bearing on the future life—that all moral evil is buried with the body in the grave. This sentiment is opposed to the nature and laws of the mind. There is an intimate and indissoluble connection between the successive states of the mind. Our present feelings, thoughts, desires, knowledge and character, are the necessary results of past feelings, thoughts, and actions. We are now what the past has made us. If at death, all influence of our past lives upon us is to cease, and a new character is to spring up at war with the past, then one of the plainest and best established laws of the mind, must be violated, and all analogy between the past and the future destroyed. This would destroy the identity of character and mind, and would, in reality, amount to the creation of a new soul.

There is nothing in death to produce this change in the moral character of the soul. What is death? It is a dissolution of the organs through which the soul now acts, and by which it communicates with the outward world. Though there is an intimate relation between the mind and the body, yet there is a distinction between the two. The powers of the body are distinct from will, thought, and affection. Why then should the latter be reformed, changed and purified by the destruction of the former? Death destroys the hands, the feet, the ears,

and the eyes ; but these are frequently destroyed during life. Will this change the moral character of the soul ? Cut off the hands of the murderer ; will this destroy his disposition to commit murder ? The destruction of the bodily organs may destroy the power of the sinner, to indulge in his vicious habits ; but it cannot destroy his inclination. Look yonder at that old sensualist ! He has indulged in sensuality until he has almost destroyed the physical man, and is no longer able to indulge his sensual passions, and, as he was want to do, plunge in sensuality. But has he lost his love for sensual pleasures ? Has the temper and disposition of his mind changed ? Does his selfishness, low habits of thought, and sinful desires perish with his body ? No ! His heart is unchanged. The moral complexion of his soul is the same. This fact *alone* proves that death does not, and cannot change the moral character of the soul.

The idea that death changes the moral character of the soul, is opposed to the nature of virtue, or moral goodness. This implies moral liberty and action. A man cannot be made virtuous and good, as an instrument of music can be tuned by a foreign hand. It cannot come from without. It is something to which he must contribute himself. It is the result of action. It implies conquest of temptation. To imagine that virtue and moral goodness can be breathed into man, "just as breath can be imparted to a diseased body," is to destroy the true distinction between mind and body, and to reduce man to a mere machine.

The idea, that there is no moral connection between the present and the future life, and that death changes the moral character of the soul, destroys all use of the

present life. If this life is not designed to have any influence upon the future state of man, and man is to be made holy and virtuous by a sovereign act of Omnipotence, why did God place him here in a state of discipline, exposed to temptation? This a problem that cannot be solved consistently with the theory, that man is made holy and happy by death, or the resurrection.

We are not left to reason alone upon this great subject. Revelation bears testimony to the same truth. Let us read a passage from the teaching of Christ upon this point: "Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo! we have left all and followed thee. And Jesus answered, and said, verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and gospels, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come, eternal life." In this passage Christ teaches three great, and thrilling truths. 1st. That the Christian shall receive an hundred-fold in "this life,"—"in this time." 2d. That he shall receive "eternal life in the world to come." 3d. That our entering into life eternal in "the world to come," depends on our conduct here—on our forsaking all and following Christ. The testimony of Paul is in harmony with the teaching of Christ: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." This language clearly establishes a connection between the present, and the future life; for if there is no connection between man's character in this life, and his future state; how can godliness have the promise "of the life which is to come?"

Paul in speaking of the judgment, and the consequences of sin and holiness, says : "God will render to every man according to his deeds : to them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life ; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness ; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." The reward and punishment here spoken of, belong to the eternal world. This is obvious from the fact that "immortality is a part of the reward that the righteous shall receive. Immortality is not attainable in this world. It belongs to the future state of man. There is no man in his senses, that seeks for immortality as a thing attainable in this world. From this passage we learn, 1st. That the consequences of man's actions reach beyond the scenes of this life ; 2d. That man's conduct in time, determines his eternal destiny.

Again, Paul says, "the wages of sin is death"—that is, *eternal death*. This is obvious from the fact, that the Apostle is speaking of personal sins. The death of the body is not the result of our sins. Man must die, whether he sins or not. The infant that knows no sin, is exposed to death, the same as the most hardened sinner. If it is not the death of the body, what death is it ? John answers : "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone—which is the *second death*."

To his Galatian brethren, Paul said, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest—which are these : Adultery, for-

nication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like : of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." "*They which do such things,*" is in the present tense ; and, "*shall not inherit the kingdom of God,*" is in the future tense—that is, they that live after the flesh in the present time, or life, shall not inherit the future everlasting kingdom of God. No other consistent interpretation can be given to this passage.

In his instructions to Timothy, Paul said, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches ; but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy ; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." That this "eternal life" belongs to the eternal world, is obvious from the twelfth verse, where the Apostle uses the word in this sense. He would not use the same word in a different sense, in the same connection, without qualifying it ; but this he has not done in the above passage. If there is no moral connection between the present and the future life, and man has nothing to do to inherit "eternal life," why does Paul exhort us to pursue a certain line of conduct, that "we may lay hold on eternal life?" Paul was too wise and good to make any thing obligatory upon man that would be of no benefit to him.

"There remaineth, therefore," said Paul, "a rest for the people of God." "Let us labor therefore to enter into

that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." From this we learn, 1st. That God has provided a rest for his people. 2d. That man has a work to do to secure this rest. This rest belongs to the eternal world. Some have applied it to the spiritual rest that the people of God enjoy in this life. This cannot be correct, from the fact that those to whom Paul was writing, were already in the possession of this rest ; but he speaks of a rest that was yet in reserve for them in the future. This rest must be in eternity. This proves that man's eternal destiny turns upon the character that he forms in time.

The promises and threatenings of the Gospel, are coetaneous in their fulfilment. The era of the fulfilment of one, is the era of the fulfilment of the other. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power ; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." Here the wicked are threatened with a punishment awful in its nature. When shall this punishment be executed ? "When Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints." This proves that the threatenings of the Gospel reach beyond the shores of time, else its promises secure to us nothing beyond this life—and this is downright infidelity.

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins ; whither I go ye cannot come : for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." When Christ left this world, he went to heaven. He "is gone into heaven, and is on

the right hand of God." He asserts, in the most unequivocal language, that those who die in their sins, cannot come to him in that glorious state. This shuts the sinner out of heaven, and proves that our admission into the abode of the blessed beyond the grave, depends upon the character that we form here.

It is obvious, from the above considerations, that there is an indissoluble connection between time and eternity—that the character we form in time, will determine our future destiny—that life is the seed time ; eternity the harvest—that

“————— Time is eternity :
Pregnant with all that eternity can give ;
Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.”

Time leaves an indelible impression upon the soul, that it will carry with it into eternity. It does not pass without leaving its footprints upon our moral and intellectual nature. Every thought, word and action, leaves its impression upon our souls, and has an important bearing upon our immortal destiny. At every step we touch a wire that will vibrate to all eternity. We are now cultivating dispositions, habits, and desires, that will cling to us with the tenacity of identity itself. We are now laying the foundation of future happiness or misery. We are now cultivating affections, sympathies, and desires, that in all coming time will shed over our souls the light, happiness, and joy of paradise ; or the darkness, misery, and gloom of hell. O ! my dying friends, “be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap ; for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” O what

a solemn and startling truth ! It should thrill every soul, and arouse all to deep and earnest thought and action.

The great end for which time is given to man, is to discipline and prepare the soul for a higher, nobler, and sublimer state ; to improve the heart ; to cultivate those affections, sympathies, desires, virtues, and graces, that will bring us in union with Christ, and qualify us for the society and blessings of heaven. Time was not given to be wasted in vanity and sin, but to be devoted in earnest efforts to gain the mastery of evil, to subdue our passions, cultivate our hearts, improve our minds, reform our lives. to acquire those virtues and graces, that shone with such peerless grandeur in the character of Christ. The supreme object of our lives should not be worldly aggrandizement, or the accumulation of property ; but the improvement of the mind, the cultivation of the heart, and the reformation of the life.

There is a great work for man to do ; evil passions are to be subdued, wrong habits to be corrected, groveling passions and desires to be eradicated from the heart, and a character to be formed that will qualify us for the enjoyment of the society and blessings of heaven. O then, “strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” “When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us ; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are : depart from me ye workers of iniquity,” O then, improve your time, “because the days are evil.” You are surrounded by dangers upon every hand. A strong and powerful under-current sets in upon you ; and unless you are watch-

ful, and earnestly engaged in improving your time, it will carry you down the stream of corruption, and ultimately plunge you in the mighty vortex of everlasting ruin. O my dying friends, beware—beware, as you value your souls! You are in imminent danger. The sea looks calm and beautiful—there is no appearance of danger—the sky is serene—the breeze prosperous, and all looks lovely and inviting; but there is a strong under-current, imperceptibly carrying you along, with ever-increasing velocity, down the stream, to certain and awful destruction. The outward circles of the awful whirlpool of eternal ruin, are imperceptibly drawing you into its terrible embrace. Oh, then, awake! awake!!—awake from the sleep of carnal security, and flee for your life. All *now* looks lovely and beautiful. All nature is clad in robes of beauty and loveliness. The soft notes of the gentle zephyrs, fall like the melting sounds of distant music upon the ear; the feathered songsters of the bower mingle their sweet strains with the music of the breeze—the sea is calm as a summer lake; the voice of joy and conviviality, from the sons of pleasure, is mingled with the melody of nature; all is joy and mirthfulness. But, hark!—what do I hear? What sound is that? It is the voice of the thunder-storm, the rushing of the whirlwind, the thundering of the mighty whirlpool, the death-shriek of the lost mariner, as he is swallowed up in the awful vortex of everlasting ruin. O ye mariners, upon the ocean of time! flee from the circling and deceitful waves of the sleeping maelstrom, Ere long it will awake from its slumbers; and in its fury and madness dash your fragile barque to pieces, and carry you down to irretrievable ruin.

DISCOURSE XV.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PRAYER.

I THESS. 5 : 17.

Pray without ceasing.

Prayer is natural to man. There are none that live entirely without prayer. A man may trample the authority of God under his feet, disregard the claims of justice and gratitude, turn a deaf ear to the melting calls of mercy, and steel his heart against the denunciations of divine vengeance, whilst in health. He may live in neglect of the author of his being, and benefactor of his life, and never bring the sacrifice of a grateful heart to the altar of prayer and thanksgiving ; and whilst the sea is calm, the sky serene, the breeze prosperous, and the tide favorable, he may seldom think of offering up a single prayer for the favor and protection of heaven ; but let the scene change, and his feelings change with it. Let a man be exposed to great danger, and his first thought is to pray. Look yonder at that sin-hardened old sailor ! He is in the midst of a fearful storm. The sky is shrouded in darkness, the thunders speak forth in a mighty voice, the wreathed lightning flashes its lurid light across the gloomy heavens, the storm rages in awful grandeur, the ship tumbles as a leaf

in the wind, and the angry waves seem ready to swallow her up every moment. Once the old sailor could blaspheme the name of his Maker, and mock at prayer; but now he pours forth his soul in solemn prayer to God, earnestly begging for the forgiveness and mercy of heaven. In affliction and danger, man seeks for relief in prayer to God. How often have we seen the hardened sinner humbled under the afflicting hand of Divine Providence, and fly for relief in prayer to the Author of all good. Look at Voltaire! In health he could blaspheme the name of his Maker, curse his Savior, and ridicule all holy things; but when the hand of disease was laid upon him, and the dark and gloomy night of death began to settle down upon his pathway, his feelings were changed, and the bitter and awful agony of his soul found utterance in solemn prayer. Frequently in sudden and imminent danger, men are engaged in prayer before they are aware of what they are doing. But men should not wait to have a spirit of prayer kindled in their hearts by some afflicting dispensation of Divine Providence, or the near approach of death. Prayer should be made a business of life. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The Divine injunction is, "Pray without ceasing." Men ought to pray, because it is right, and not because their peculiar circumstances compel them to pray.

Prayer is regarded by the great mass of Christians as an arbitrary appointment of God. It is generally thought that God requires man to pray, simply because he has a right to command, and make such appointments as he sees fit. This is a mistake. God never commands or makes an appointment because he has a right to command, but because it is right in the nature of things, and

is calculated to enhance the happiness of man. Prayer has its foundation in the philosophy of things, and God commands man to pray, because it is calculated in its nature to bless and happyfy the soul. Prayer is in harmony with the moral and spiritual nature of man.

There is one great principle in all the works of God, both in the kingdom of nature and grace, that strikes the reflecting mind with peculiar interest ; that is, in all the arrangements of infinite wisdom, the great leading object is the happiness of the universe of mind. This sublime and thrilling truth is written in living characters upon all nature. When we look abroad in the material universe, we read this great truth in all its arrangements. Every arrangement in the economy of nature is subservient to this sublime end. Every provision is calculated in its nature to promote the happiness of man. We read this truth in the arrangement of the seasons. The fresh and blooming spring, the warm and glowing summer, the mild and lovely autumn, the cold and stormy winter—are all calculated to meet the wants, and promote the happiness of the denizens of earth. The atmosphere is admirably adapted to the nature of man's lungs, suited to meet his wants, and promote his happiness. Light is most beautifully adapted to the nature of man's eye, and designed in its nature to promote his happiness. Without this element, the material universe would be shrouded in midnight gloom and darkness. We would be shut out forever from the enjoyment of the beautiful and diversified scenery of earth, could not carry on the necessary business of life, would be cut off from one of the richest sources of enjoyment, and all would languish and die.

The atmosphere is endowed with an undulating quali-

ty, that it might waft to the ear the pleasures of sound, and all the charms of music ; that we might listen to the music of the murmuring brook, the soft whispers of the gentle breeze, the soothing sound of the rivulet, the noise of the water-fall, the hum of bees, the buzz of insects, the chirping of birds, the soft notes of the nightingale, the rich melody of the songsters of the bower, the numerous modulations of the human voice, the soft notes of the piano forte, the solemn sounds of the organ, the roaring of the stormy ocean, the dashing of the mighty cataract, and the rolling thunder. The gift of speech is admirably adapted to promote our happiness. By it we are enabled to convey our thoughts to other minds, to inspire them with new and sublime aspirations, to soothe the sorrowing soul, to comfort the mourner, encourage the fainting, and arouse the careless to action. Thus we see that in all the arrangements of God, the happiness of his creatures is the great ultimatum. We read this sublime truth in the changing seasons, the light of day, the darkness and gloom of night, the warm and genial rays of the sun, the music of the bees, the opening flower, the luxuriant harvest, the soft notes of nature's songsters, the refreshing shower, the murmuring brook, the flowing river, the mighty ocean, the roaring thunder, and the lightning's vivid flash.

When we ascend from the natural to the spiritual, from the kingdom of nature to the kingdom of grace, we behold the same principle in all the arrangements and provisions in the economy of redemption. Every institution in the economy of salvation, is adapted in its nature to promote the happiness of man, to call out and cultivate the heart, to quicken into life and action the warmest feelings, affections, and sympathies of the soul ; to elevate, refine,

and purify the thoughts, to bring man nearer to God, and in closer union with heaven.

There is nothing arbitrary in the kingdom of grace. Every institution and law has its foundation in the nature of things, and is admirably adapted to enhance the happiness of man. We read this great truth in the ordinance of prayer. Prayer has its foundation in the moral and spiritual nature of man, and is calculated to make man better, and promote his happiness.

Prayer exerts a healthy influence over the soul. It tends to purify the heart, elevate and refine the thoughts, strengthen and enlarge the sympathies of the soul, subdue the passions, and bring man into closer union with God. Prayer is calculated to subdue the raging passions of the human heart, and inspire man with a spirit of calmness. When man is aroused to anger, and his soul is torn by contending passions, let him retire to his closet, and approach the Throne of God in solemn prayer, and how soon his mind is calmed, and the raging passions of his soul hushed into silence. His anger vanishes before the spirit of prayer, as the darkness and gloom of night before the light of day. Those who live near to the Throne of Grace, and pray much, are almost invariably characterized by calmness of mind, and sweetness of temper.

Prayer is calculated to beget and keep alive a spirit of love in the heart. We are commanded to pray for all men; and obedience to this command is calculated to interest our minds in the happiness of our fellow men, and call out and cultivate a spirit of love for them. By daily prayer for our fellow-men, we are led to think much about them, their situation, and their wants—and thus we

become necessarily interested in their salvation and happiness. It is impossible to pray earnestly and daily for the salvation of a man, without becoming deeply interested in his welfare, and imbibing a spirit of love for him; and the more we pray for our brother, the more our interest and love for him increases. Prayer strengthens, deepens, and enlarges the sympathies and affections of the soul. It cultivates and strengthens those ties of affection, sympathy, and love, that unite all Christian hearts in one great fraternal bond. One great reason why there is no more love, affection, and sympathy among Christians than there is, is because they do not pray for one another as much as they ought. As the spirit of prayer declines in the Church, jealousies, envyings, difficulties and quarrels increase; but as the spirit of prayer revives, all these things vanish from the Church, Christians come nearer together, and their affection, sympathy, and love for each other, increase. How often have we seen Churches that were rent and torn to pieces by the quarrels and contentions of its members, united, all its wounds healed, its difficulties settled, and peace and harmony restored by the revival of a spirit of prayer in the Church. Sometimes when we visit the Throne of Grace, our hearts are filled with hatred and bitterness against some brother that has trespassed against us; but this feeling vanishes before the spirit of earnest prayer—and, before we are done praying, it is all gone. This has been the experience of thousands.

Prayer purifies and elevates the thoughts. It banishes unholy and impure thoughts from the mind, and leads the thoughts from debasing and groveling subjects to the contemplation of pure, holy, and elevating objects. It natu-

rally leads the mind to reflect much upon God, to meditate upon his purity, holiness, benevolence, goodness, and love; and by beholding, we are changed into the same image, "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." It takes the mind away from the groveling pursuits and ends of earth, inspires it with new and holier aspirations, and places the thoughts upon God.

The prayer meeting is a wise appointment of Infinite Wisdom, and one of the most essential means of grace. It is admirably adapted to cultivate and call out the heart—awaken and quicken into life and action the warmest affections, sympathies and desires of the soul. In the social prayer meeting, Christians exert a mutual and healthy influence upon each other. Their prayers and exhortations warm up their hearts, awaken the sympathies of the soul, calm the mind, purify the affections, elevate the thoughts, subdue the passions, strengthen the moral power of the soul, and aid in establishing the kingdom of righteousness, love, and truth in the heart. It cultivates the moral strength of the soul, and the Christian goes forth from the prayer meeting to engage in the great and arduous duties of life, with new power and energy. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings, as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

Family devotion exerts a healthy and saving influence upon the family circle. It subdues the rough and boisterous passions of the heart, leads to a calm and thoughtful contemplation of the great subject of religion, awakens an interest in the mind, and lays the foundation of the future religious character of the child. The influence of

family devotion will follow the child through all coming time. He may wander far from his father's hearth—the scenes and associations of his youth may pass, in a great degree, from his mind—he may mingle in the pleasures and exciting pursuits of earth—he may disregard the claims of gratitude and justice, and steel his heart against the denunciations of Divine vengeance; but he can never cast off the influence of the family devotion. It will follow him through all the changing scenes of life, and often in the midst of his sinful indulgence, the prayers of his father or mother will come up in his mind like kind angels from heaven, calling him in the melting voice of undying sympathy, to turn from his sinful way and seek the salvation of his soul. Nothing is so essential to the peace, harmony, happiness, and salvation of the social circle as fervent family devotion; and one of the most lovely and interesting scenes in this world of sin, is the family bowed around the altar of prayer, offering up their morning or evening orison. The impressions made upon the youthful mind by family devotion, can never be erased, and often in the rough voyage of life, when the storm and the tempest howl around, and the world looks dark and dreary, does the thoughts flash across the stormy ocean of time, and dwell with rapture upon those calm and holy scenes of devotion, when the family were gathered around the altar of prayer. I have known instances where the impression made upon the youthful mind by those scenes, has been buried beneath a flood of worldly cares for years; but, in after life, some dispensation of God's providence called them up vividly before the mind, and led the soul to reflection and to God.

It is obvious, from the above considerations, that prayer has its foundation in the nature of things, and is calculated to bless and happify the soul of man—to make him better—to elevate him in the scale of being—to bring him in closer union with heaven and God. From this consideration, Christians should never suffer the fire of devotion to expire from the altar of their hearts. The life of the Christian should be a life of prayer: the opening morning, the evening twilight, and the silent watches of the night, should witness the fervor of his devotion. Like his Savior, he should frequently retire from the noise and tumult of the world, to hold sweet communion with the Father of his spirit in secret. He should pray without ceasing.

We have every encouragement to pray: “For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.” Our heavenly Father speaks to us from the mercy seat, as a kind and tender parent, inviting us in the affectionate voice of fraternal kindness to come to him, and he will supply all our wants. O! then, my Christian friends, let us live near the Throne of Grace—pray much, and we shall come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

“Almighty God, in humble prayer,
To thee our souls we lift;
Do thou our waiting minds prepare
For thy most needful gift.

We ask not golden streams of wealth
Along our path to flow;
We ask not undecaying health,
Nor length of years below.

We ask not honors, which an hour
May bring and take away ;
We ask not pleasure, pomp, and power,
Lest we should go astray.

We ask for wisdom : Lord, impart
The knowledge how to live ;
A wise and understanding heart
To all before thee give."

DISCOURSE XVI.

THE REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

I PETER 3: 15.

Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

In a system of religion professing to come from God, we would expect to find principles and institutions in harmony with all the developments of Deity in the universe. The most striking and interesting feature in the works of Infinite Wisdom, is their harmony and admirable adaptation to one great and sublime end—the cultivation and development of mind. When we look abroad in the material universe, we behold the most beautiful order and perfect adaptation. We find no traces of antagonistical principles. All is harmony and peace. Here a great question arises in the mind—does the principles and teaching of Christianity harmonize with the teachings of nature?—or are their teachings antagonistical? I answer, that the teachings of nature and Christianity perfectly harmonize. They are one. The only difference is, the light of revelation is superior to the light of nature. Where the light of nature fails, and darkness and gloom settles down upon our path, there

Christianity sheds around us its hallowed light, and leads us on through the bewildering maze up to God and heaven. My object, in the present discourse, is to establish the reasonableness of Christianity, and show its harmony with all the developments of Deity.

My first argument in support of the reasonableness of Christianity, is its adaptation to become a universal religion. God is a universal Father. He is the Creator of all men. "He hath made of one blood all nations of men." Hence, in a system of religion professing to come from God, we would naturally expect to find evidence of its adaptation to the wants and capacity of all men—features which would fit it to become a universal religion. Now, is this true of the religion of the New Testament? Is it adapted to the wants of all men? Do we find in it the features of a universal religion? I answer in the affirmative. Here we find a system suited to the wants of the universal family of man—features that fit it to become a universal religion.

The representations, that the New Testament give us of the character of God, are such as are calculated to draw to him the hearts and hopes of all men. In every other system of religion, Divinity was represented as sustaining a peculiar relation to the nation for whom the religion was designed. The Egyptians had their system of religion, and in it the Divinity was represented as sustaining a relation to them, which he did not sustain to any other people. We find the same feature in every system of religion entertained by man. There is nothing in any of the different religious systems of the earth to draw the hearts and hopes of all men to the Deity; but the character of God, as exhibited in the New Testament, is ad-

mirably fitted to draw all hearts to him. He is not represented as sustaining a peculiar relation to any particular nation of the earth; but is set forth as the great universal Father of all, distributing his blessings with an impartial hand. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust." How different is this from the character of Jupiter, Saturn, Isis, Osiris, Typhon, and the long list of heathen Gods. At the throne of God all nations may bow, and find equal acceptance.

Another feature of the Christian religion, as developed in the New Testament, which fits it for a universal religion is, that it is remarkably free from forms and ceremonies. Here we find none of the pomp, show, forms, and cumbersome ceremonies of the different religions of the earth; but we find a beautiful simplicity. The great stress in all the religious systems of the earth, is laid on forms and ceremonies; but in Christianity it is laid on the feelings, desires, affections, dispositions, and sentiments of the heart. It emphatically declares that the only true worship is a worship "in spirit and in truth." The religion of the Gospel enjoins but two positive institutions, and these are so simple and comprehensive that they may be observed by all men. The religion of the New Testament is simple and comprehensive in its nature, and so remarkably free from forms, rituals, and ceremonies, that it is suited to all people, of all climes, and under all circumstances. Christianity is a plain, perspicuous, comprehensive system of religion, suited to the comprehension of all minds, and the condition of all men, in all climes. In a religion coming from the universal Father of all human beings, we would expect to find the clear-

ness and brightness of the sun, that it may shine upon all ranks of society—the high and the low—the learned and the unlearned. In such a religion we would expect a system of Divine truth, that all could comprehend, and teaching that would come home to every heart. Such is the religion of the New Testament. Here is a grand, beautiful, and sublime system of religion, suited to all minds. Whilst the teaching of the New Testament unfolds new and sublime truths to the cultivated mind, it stoops to the capacity and instructs the most uncultivated. It speaks to all men with the same voice, of the same God upon whom all are dependent, of the same duties that all should perform, of the same sin that burdens all consciences, of the same sorrows that pierce all hearts, of that death that terminates all lives, and of the same great and incomprehensible future to which all minds, of all nations, and all ages, have ever turned with deep and inquiring anxiety. It addresses the same doctrine, the same admonitions, the same precepts, the same consolations, the same promises, the same hopes to all minds. It warns of dangers to which all are exposed, enjoins virtues that all should practice, and offers consolations which all at some seasons need. Its spirit of universal love and benevolence is suited to all nations of all climes. It is obvious, from these considerations, that the religion of the New Testament is fitted to become a universal religion, and is admirably adapted to the wants of all men, of all nations, and of all climes. Here we see the reasonableness of Christianity, and its harmony with the character of God, as developed in the material universe.

When we look around us in the world of mankind, we behold a vast disproportion between the capacious mind of man, and the sources of enjoyment by which he is surrounded. There is nothing in all the realm of nature to meet the large desires of the immortal mind. Earthly possessions do not meet the wants and satisfy the desires of the soul. An increase of possession only enlarges the desires of the human heart. We sometimes imagine that the possession of such and such objects, will satisfy the mind. We acquire them, but the mind is still unsatisfied, and its wants unmet. The mind is constantly reaching after something higher than the objects of earth. "Man never is, but always to be blest." Learning cannot satisfy the wants of the mind. Learning, instead of satisfying the desires of mind, enlarges its powers, capacities, and desires. Now, in a religion professing to come from God, we would expect to find provisions suited to the wants and adapted to the large desires of the human heart. Is this true of the religion of the Gospel? Do we here find provisions suited to the wants and desires of the soul? Here is revealed an unchangeable and infinite Being of boundless perfections, on which the mind may repose, and in whom it may find excellencies wide enough for its ever enlarging capacities. Here is unfolded an ocean of thought, that the most capacious mind can never fathom; a field of knowledge whose boundaries the most cultivated mind can never reach—a mine of knowledge that can never be exhausted—a treasure of gold that can never be expended—a glorious and sublime future, that will more than meet the most enlarged desires of the most capacious mind. This clearly demonstrates the reasonableness of Christianity.

The moral constitution of man is such, that his happiness necessarily depends upon righteousness of life and benevolence of heart. When he cherishes a spirit of love, goodness, and benevolence in his soul, and his actions are in harmony with his knowledge of duty, peace, happiness, and complacency of conscience follow. Man's moral constitution is such, that happiness and complacency of conscience necessarily follow goodness of heart, and holiness of life. A single deviation from the path of known duty, or the indulgence of a wicked feeling towards any of God's creatures, will destroy the happiness of mind, and disturb the complacency of the conscience. Even the indulgence of a feeling of hatred or envy towards an enemy, will destroy the soul's happiness. Such being the moral constitution that God has given to man, we would expect to find in a religion coming from him, a system of instruction in harmony with it. Now is this true of the teachings of the Gospel? Do we find in it a system of instruction in harmony with the moral constitution of man? I answer in the affirmative. The New Testament enjoins strict obedience to the will of God, the discharge of all known duty, and the cultivation of a spirit of goodness, love, forgiveness, and benevolence. Its teachings are in strict harmony with the moral nature of man. Here again we behold the reasonableness of Christianity.

In the mind of man, we behold a principle of endless progression. When we look into the soul of man, we are struck with the infinite superiority of the mind to the body—of the ever-active soaring intellect, to those limbs and organs that tend to the earth. The body soon comes to maturity and physical perfection. But the mind perpetually expands. Cultivation instead of exhausting its

powers, only develops them. The powers of the mind are enlarged and strengthened by cultivation ; and the farther man advances in wisdom and knowledge, the stronger the powers of the mind become, and the more extensive the intellectual field that opens before him. In the very nature of the soul we read its endless progression. Such being the nature of the soul that God has given to man, we would expect to find in a system of religion professing to come from him, principles in harmony with it. Is this true of the Gospel ? All who are acquainted with its teachings must answer in the affirmative. Christianity places an infinite value upon the soul, and throws entire contempt upon the body and its interests, in comparison with the soul and its eternal interests. The provisions of Christianity are admirably adapted to call out and cultivate the intellectual powers of man, and carry him forward in his ever-onward march. The Gospel reveals a bright and glorious future, where the powers of the soul shall be fully developed, and the immortal mind shall ever increase in wisdom, knowledge, virtue and goodness, and shall ever advance towards the great fountain of infinite perfection. Thus we see the principles and teachings of Christianity are in harmony with the nature of man.

We behold in man a principle of sociality—qualities that form him for society and association with his fellow beings. Man is formed for society, and he cannot be happy without it. He is so constituted that one of the richest sources of his earthly happiness is the social circle. Is the teaching of Christianity in harmony with the social nature of man ? Perfectly. Here we find institutions and teachings that are calculated to refine and cultivate the social powers of the soul, and to unite all men in one

great family—one great brotherhood. It slays the enmity, destroys the prejudices, and strengthens the social powers of the heart. It breaks down all partition walls in society, and inspires the soul with a spirit of universal love and good will. It makes friends of the most implacable enemies.

When we look into the soul, we behold stains of sin, fears and forebodings of guilt. The moral and spiritual beauty of the soul is marred by sin, and its godlike powers are perverted by iniquity. Such being the state of man, we would expect to find in a system of religion, coming from the Author of all good, provision made for the regeneration of the soul—the redemption of man from sin—and aid granted to strengthen the soul in its struggles for the mastery of evil, and the attainment of virtue. Is this true of the religion of Christ? To the very letter. Here we find ample provision made for the regeneration of the soul; blood sealed promises of forgiveness, and proffers of divine aid to strengthen the moral powers of the soul. Christianity proposes nothing short of the complete regeneration of the soul, its change into the moral image of God, the full development of all its powers, and its happiness in the bright realms of unfading day.

When we look into the soul we behold a principle of activity. The nature of man's mind is such, that he must be employed, he cannot remain unemployed. Without employment he is restless and unhappy. A secret inward power is perpetually urging him onward, and if he is not employed in something good—in works of benevolence and virtue, he is engaged in works of darkness. Now are the teachings and principles of christianity in harmony with this principle of the soul? Are they cal-

culated to drive man from the walks of life, and crush this principle of activity in the soul; or are they calculated to call it out and cultivate it, and direct the mind in useful fields of labor? The principles of christianity are calculated to awaken and quicken into life the principles of activity in the mind. The gospel opens a vast field of useful and interesting labor to the Christian, and enjoins it as an imperative duty upon the Christian, to be always engaged in doing good—in laboring to promote the happiness of the human family. Thus we see that the principles and precepts of christianity are in perfect harmony with the nature of man.

The more we study the works of nature, the farther we extend our inquiries, and push our investigations, the more we are impressed with the great and sublime truth, that “all are but parts of one stupendous whole”—that they are the products of one wisdom, power, and goodness. The perfect harmony of the works of nature, and the wisdom developed in the universe, clearly evince the great truth that the universe is the work of Infinite intelligence. This thrilling truth is written in characters of living light upon the starry walls of the universe. Are the teaching of christianity in harmony with this great truth? Perfectly. The gospel teaches us that the universe, with all its myriads of inhabitants, is the productions of one Infinite mind.

When we look around us in the economy of nature, we behold evidence of impartial goodness and love. God sends his rain and sunshine on the evil and the good, confines his blessings to no particular nation or favored people, but distributes them with an impartial hand upon all men. The sun sheds his genial rays impartially

upon all; the refreshing showers fall alike upon the fields of all; the gentle zephyrs fan the fevered brow of the poor man as well as the rich; nature opens her rich stores of wealth alike to all men. Here we behold the impartial goodness of God. Now, are the principles and provisions of christianity in harmony with this great universal truth? Perfectly. It shines upon the pages of holy writ with all the brightness of the sun, In the provisions of the Gospel, we read the universal love and benevolence of God. The blessings of christianity are free and impartial as the sunshine and rain. Here, christianity and nature perfectly harmonize.

In the material universe we behold one great and stupendous system—one great whole. Nothing strikes the reflecting mind with greater force than this sublime truth. In the universe of matter nothing stands alone. The lovely rose that adorns the garden, sustains an intimate relation to the earth, the air, the clouds and the sunshine. The vast and stupendous worlds that roll through the extensive wilds of ether, are dependent upon each other, and are held in their orbits by mutual influence. From the humblest flower up to the tallest tree that adorns the forest—from the grain of sand up to the ponderous worlds that plough their way through the unmeasured fields of space—there is a complete system of dependence. Harmony is the great law of the universe. Here the teachings of christianity and the material universe harmonize. They perfectly agree. The great object of christianity is to bring the intelligent creature of God into the same harmony, peace, and union, that binds the material universe together—to unite all in one great universal brotherhood—to hush into eternal silence the clangor of arms,

and the thunder of war—to bring all into harmony with God and Heaven.

In nature and providence, notwithstanding all their beauty and harmony, we behold many perplexing aspects. Here are mingled sunshine and storm, success and adversity, health and sickness, love and hatred, war and peace, pleasure and pain, abundance and want, life and death. These to a careless observer, appear to be mixed up without any aim or design. Reason earnestly desires a solution of this great problem, the discovery of some great centralizing truth around which the seemingly discordant elements revolve. Christianity unties the gordian knot, solves the problem, and unfolds to the mind, in the midst of seeming discord, a great universal system of harmony, union, and benevolence, a great central truth around which all revolve, as unity of purpose in the midst of seeming hostile dispensations of Providence—a future and everlasting state beyond the grave where the gloom of earth shall no longer shroud the mind in darkness; but we shall know even as we are known. “We now see through a glass darkly: but then face to face.”

It has long been thought that the teachings of reason and revelation are at war with each other; but this is a mistake. They perfectly harmonize. They are one. Christianity is the key that unlocks the mysteries of the universe, and reveals the great and sublime purposes of God.

“’Tis revelation that satisfies all doubts,
And solves all mysteries except its own,
And so illuminates the path of life
That fools discover it and stray no more.”

Revelation scatters the dark clouds that hung over the past, reveals the birth of time, the creation of the world, the formation and fall of man, the origin of evil, and contains the long and unbroken chain of prophecies, miracles, and wonders, that reach through the period of four thousand years. It dispels the darkness and gloom that hung around the tomb, and reveals a glorious and sublime future where the pure and holy shall enjoy the society of the holy angels, the companionship of Christ, and the smiles of our Heavenly Father.

DISCOURSE XVII.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S LOVE.

I JOHN 4 : 19.

We love him, because he first loved us.

It was the doctrine of some of the ancient philosophers, that God is in no way interested in the affairs of earth, and is entirely indifferant to the wants of man. This is a wrong view of the character of God, and tends to sink him in the affections of his creatures. Even the light of nature gives us higher and more exalted views of the divine character. When we look abroad in the universe of God, we behold a vast magazine of the richest provisions for the wants of man. Every thing speaks of the goodness of God. The falling leaf, the rushing stream, the gentle zephyrs of summer, the bleak winds of winter, the mighty ocean, and the bellowing thunder, all speak of the goodness of God. The goodness of God is stamped upon every thing by which we are surrounded ; and when we turn from the beautiful scenery of earth, and look abroad through the windows of science into the vast empire of Jehovah, we behold it written in characters of light upon the starry walls of the universe.

There is nothing that transpires without the knowledge and permission of God. Every thing is under his control, from the falling of a sparrow up to the revolutions of empires, and the fall of kingdoms. He is enthroned in heaven as a kind father, scattering his blessings throughout the universe. He openeth his hand and satisfieth the wants of every living creature. Our love for the divine character grows out of the goodners exhibited in the works of God. "We love him because he first loved us."

Man is a being of a three-fold nature, to-wit,—animal, intellectual, and spiritual: and to render him happy, he must have animal, intellectual, and spiritual food. In each of these departments God has richly provided for the wants of man, Man is so constituted that he must have a regular supply of food to perpetuate his life. His physical organization requires it. God has richly provided for the wants of man's physical nature. The world is a vast magazine of provisions. God has so constituted us that the gratification of the demands of our physical nature is a source of exquisite happiness. What is more pleasant and agreeable than to eat when we are hungry, and to drink when we are dry? In this we see the goodness of God; for he could have constituted us so, that to eat would have been unpleasant, and to drink, a source of misery. All arrangements of the physical economy of man, are designed to promote his happiness.

Man possesses a mind of the most gigantic powers. The mind has its wants, and no man can be intellectually happy unless these wants are supplied. God has made rich provisions for the intellectual wants of man. An unbounded field of wisdom and knowledge lies open before him, through which he may travel, as long as eterni-

ty shall last, without reaching its boundaries. The vast magazine of intellectual food can never be exhausted. The farther man advances, the wider the field opens before him; and the deeper he digs, the richer the mine. Much has been accomplished, but much yet remains to be accomplished. Many of the most important sciences are yet in their infancy. Man has laid the rock-built pyramid of science deep in the bowels of the earth, slowly, and with untiring industry. He has rolled up the huge rocks until the mystic pile lifts its lofty head to the skies—and, from its towering summit, he looks abroad upon the vast universe of worlds. Man has penetrated the bowels of the earth, and brought forth her hidden treasures, has arrested the thunder bolts of heaven, and made the lightning his servant—has measured the sun and the planets, meted out the distance of the stars, and has followed the blazing comet in its flight across the unmeasured fields of space—but man is yet on the threshold of the great temple of knowledge.

There is a principle of universality in man. He loves the beautiful and sublime. He loves to contemplate the extensive plain and the mighty ocean. He gazes with delight upon the mountain scenery, and listens with admiration to the bellowings of the thunder-storm. He loves to wander amid the beautiful scenery of the forest, and listen to the rich melody of its feathered songsters. All these things have their charms—but the mind soon becomes weary with contemplating one object, however grand it may be. The mind is too vast to be tied down to one object alone. God has made the beautiful and infinite variety of scenery by which we are surrounded, to meet the wants of the soul, and exhibit his goodness and glory.

The most glorious and sublime exhibition of the love of God to man, is the gift of his Son, to die for our sins, to redeem us from the slavery of sin, and prepare us for heaven. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son, to be the propitiation for our sins,"

The foundation of our love to God is his goodness. "We love him, because he first loved us." Love is a principle in man, founded upon real or supposed loveliness in the object loved. Why does man love any object? Why does a man love his wife? Because he sees, or thinks he does, something lovely in her person or character. Why does the man of pleasure love his sinful enjoyments? Because he sees something which, to his mind, appears lovely. It is impossible for a man to love an object which to him has nothing lovely or good in it. We cannot love an unlovely object. It is impossible in the nature of things.

All happy obedience must spring from love. Obedience to an object loved, blesses and happifies the spirit, if the conscience approves of the object loved and obeyed. The obedience of the slave to his master is productive of unhappiness, because it springs from a principle of fear. If I were compelled to obey a being that I did not love, it would render me unhappy—but to obey a being that I loved, would happify the mind. The Christian is happy in obeying God, because he loves him; and his conscience approves of the object loved, and the laws obeyed. Hence, said David, "Great peace have they which love thy law."



10

BT
77

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 022 012 228 1



LIBRARY OF CONGRES



0 022 012 228 1